



School Edition

THE WORKS  
OF  
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

POET LAUREATE

*IN FOUR PARTS*

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# CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
TO THE QUEEN . . . . .	1	JUVENILIA—Early Sonnets <i>continued</i> —	
JUVENILIA . . . . .	2	6 Poland . . . . .	26
Clanbel . . . . .	2	7 'Caress'd or chidden' . . . . .	26
Nothing will Die . . . . .	2	8. 'The form, the form alone is eloquent' . . . . .	26
All Things will Die . . . . .	3	9 'Wan sculptor, weepest thou' . . . . .	26
Leonine Elegiacs . . . . .	3	10 'If I were loved, as I desire to be' . . . . .	27
Supposed Confessions of a Second-rate Sensitive Mind . . . . .	3	11 The Bridesmaid . . . . .	27
The Kraken . . . . .	6	THE LADY OF SHALOTT, AND OTHER POEMS :	
Song . . . . .	6	The Lady of Shalott . . . . .	27
Lilian . . . . .	6	Mariana in the South . . . . .	29
Isabel . . . . .	6	The Two Voices . . . . .	30
Manana . . . . .	7	The Miller's Daughter . . . . .	36
To ——— . . . . .	8	Fatima . . . . .	39
Madeline . . . . .	8	Cenone . . . . .	40
Song—The Owl . . . . .	9	The Sisters . . . . .	44
Second Song—To the Same . . . . .	9	To ——— . . . . .	44
Recollections of the Arabian Nights . . . . .	9	The Palace of Art . . . . .	44
Ode to Memory . . . . .	11	Lady Clara Vere de Vere . . . . .	49
Song . . . . .	13	The May Queen . . . . .	50
A Character . . . . .	13	New-Year's Eve . . . . .	51
The Poet . . . . .	13	Conclusion . . . . .	52
The Poet's Mind . . . . .	14	The Lotos-Eaters . . . . .	54
The Sea-Fairies . . . . .	15	Choric Song . . . . .	54
The Deserted House . . . . .	15	A Dream of Fair Women . . . . .	56
The Dying Swan . . . . .	16	The Blackbird . . . . .	61
A Dirge . . . . .	16	The Death of the Old Year . . . . .	62
Love and Death . . . . .	17	To J. S . . . . .	62
The Ballad of Oriana . . . . .	17	On a Mourner . . . . .	63
Circumstance . . . . .	18	'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease' . . . . .	64
The Merman . . . . .	19	'Of old sat Freedom on the heights' . . . . .	64
The Mermaid . . . . .	19	'Love thou thy land' . . . . .	64
Adeline . . . . .	20	England and America in 1782 . . . . .	66
Margaret . . . . .	21	The Goose . . . . .	66
Rosalind . . . . .	22	ENGLISH IDYLLS AND OTHER POEMS :	
Eleanore . . . . .	22	The Epic . . . . .	67
'My life is full of weary days' . . . . .	24	Morte d'Arthur . . . . .	68
Early Sonnets . . . . .	24	The Gardener's Daughter, or, the Pictures . . . . .	72
1 Sonnet to ——— . . . . .	24	Dora . . . . .	77
2 Sonnet to J. M. K . . . . .	25	Audley Court . . . . .	79
3 'Mine be the strength of spirit' . . . . .	25	Walking to the Mail . . . . .	81
4 Alexander . . . . .	25	Edwin Morris, or, the Lake . . . . .	83
5 Buonaparte . . . . .	25	St. Simeon Stylites . . . . .	85

# CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
ENGLISH IDYLLS AND OTHER POEMS <i>contd</i> —		ENGLISH IDYLLS AND OTHER POEMS <i>contd</i> —	
The Talking Oak . . . . .	88	Sir Galahad . . . . .	110
Love and Duty . . . . .	92	Edward Gray . . . . .	111
The Golden Year . . . . .	94	Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue . . . . .	111
Ulysses . . . . .	95	Lady Clare . . . . .	114
Tithonus . . . . .	96	The Captain . . . . .	115
Locksley Hall . . . . .	98	The Lord of Burleigh . . . . .	116
Godiva . . . . .	103	The Voyage . . . . .	117
The Day-Dream . . . . .	104	Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere . . . . .	118
Prologue . . . . .	104	A Farewell . . . . .	119
The Sleeping Palace . . . . .	104	The Beggar Maid . . . . .	119
The Sleeping Beauty . . . . .	105	The Eagle . . . . .	119
The Arrival . . . . .	106	'Move eastward, happy earth, and leave' . . . . .	119
The Revival . . . . .	106	'Come not, when I am dead' . . . . .	119
The Departure . . . . .	107	The Letters . . . . .	120
Moral . . . . .	107	The Vision of Sin . . . . .	120
L'Envoi . . . . .	107	To —, after reading a Life and Letters . . . . .	123
Epilogue . . . . .	108	To E. L., on his Travels in Greece . . . . .	124
Amphion . . . . .	108	'Break, break, break' . . . . .	124
St Agnes' Eve . . . . .	109	The Poet's Song . . . . .	124

## TO THE QUEEN.

*Revered, beloved—O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,*

*Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,*

*Victoria,—since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;*

*And leave us rulers of your blood  
As noble till the latest day !  
May children of our children say,  
' She wrought her people lasting good ,*

*And should your greatness, and the care  
That yokes with empire, yield you time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there ,*

*' Her count was pure ; her life serene ;  
God gave her peace , her land reposed ;  
A thousand claims to reverence closed  
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;*

*Then—while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throatile calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—*

*' And statesmen at her council met  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand, and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet*

*' By shaping some august decree,  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'*

March 1851.

## JUVENILIA.

### CLARIBEL.

#### A MELODY.

##### I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall :  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

##### II.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone :  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone :  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lute-white swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
The callow throistle lispeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
The babbling rannel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

### NOTHING WILL DIE

WHEN will the stream be aweary of  
flowing  
Under my eye ?  
When will the wind be aweary of blowing  
Over the sky ?

When will the clouds be aweary of  
fleeting ?  
When will the heart be aweary of  
beating ?  
And nature die ?  
Never, oh ! never, nothing will die ;  
The stream flows,  
The wind blows,  
The cloud fleets,  
The heart beats,  
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;  
All things will change  
Thro' eternity.  
'Tis the world's winter ;  
Autumn and summer  
Are gone long ago ;  
Earth is dry to the centre,  
But spring, a new comer,  
A spring rich and strange,  
Shall make the winds blow  
Round and round,  
Thro' and thro',  
Here and there,  
Till the air  
And the ground  
Shall be fill'd with life anew

The world was never made ;  
It will change, but it will not fade.  
So let the wind range ;  
For even and morn  
Ever will be  
Thro' eternity.  
Nothing was born ;  
Nothing will die ;  
All things will change.

## ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its  
flowing

Under my eye ;  
Warmly and broadly the south winds are  
blowing

Over the sky.  
One after another the white clouds are  
fleeing ;  
Every heart this May morning in joyance  
is beating

Full merrily ;  
Yet all things must die.  
The stream will cease to flow ;  
The wind will cease to blow ;  
The clouds will cease to fleet ;  
The heart will cease to beat ;  
For all things must die.

All things must die.  
Spring will come never more.

Oh ! vanity !  
Death waits at the door.  
See ! our friends are all forsaking  
The wine and the merrymaking.  
We are call'd—we must go.

Laid low, very low,  
In the dark we must lie.  
The merry glees are still ;  
The voice of the bird  
Shall no more be heard,  
Nor the wind on the hill

Oh ! misery !  
Hark ! death is calling  
While I speak to ye,  
The jaw is falling,  
The red cheek paling,  
The strong limbs failing ;  
Ice with the warm blood mixing ;  
The eyeballs fixing.  
Nine times goes the passing bell :  
Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth  
Had a birth,  
As all men know,  
Long ago.  
And the old earth must die.  
So let the warm winds range,  
And the blue wave beat the shore ;

For even and morn  
Ye will never see  
Thro' eternity.  
All things were born.  
Ye will come never more,  
For all things must die.

## LEONINE ELEGIACS.

LOW-FLOWING breezes are roaming the  
broad valley dimm'd in the gloaming :  
Thoro' the black-stemm'd pines only  
the far river shines.  
Creeping thro' blossomy rushes and bowers  
of rose-blowing bushes,  
Down by the poplar tall rivulets babble  
and fall.  
Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly ; the  
grasshopper carolleteth clearly ;  
Deeply the wood-dove coos ; shrilly the  
owlet halloos ;  
Winds creep ; dews fall chilly : in her  
first sleep earth breathes stilly :  
Over the pools in the burn water-gnats  
murmur and mourn.  
Sadly the far kine loweth : the glimmer-  
ing water outfloweth :  
Twin peaks shadow'd with pine slope to  
the dark hyaline  
Low-throned Hesper is stayed between  
the two peaks ; but the Naiad  
Throbbing in mild unrest holds him  
beneath in her breast.  
The ancient poetess singeth, that Hes-  
perus all things bringeth,  
Smoothing the wearied mind : bring me  
my love, Rosalind.  
Thou comest morning or even ; she  
cometh not morning or even.  
False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is my  
sweet Rosalind ?

## SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND.

O GOD ! my God ! have mercy now.  
I faint, I fall. Men say that Thou

Didst die for me, for such as *me*,  
 Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,  
 And that my sin was as a thorn  
 Among the thorns that girt Thy brow,  
 Wounding Thy soul.—That even now,  
 In this extremest misery  
 Of ignorance, I should requite  
 A sign ! and if a bolt of fire  
 Would rive the slumbrous summer noon  
 While I do pray to Thee alone,  
 Think my belief would stronger grow !  
 Is not my human pride brought low ?  
 The boastings of my spirit still ?  
 The joy I had in my freewill  
 All cold, and dead, and corpse-like grown ?  
 And what is left to me, but Thou,  
 And faith in Thee ? Men pass me by ;  
 Christians with happy countenances—  
 And children all seem full of Thee !  
 And women smile with saint-like glances  
 Like Thine own mother's when she bow'd  
 Above Thee, on that happy morn  
 When angels spake to men aloud,  
 And Thou and peace to earth were born.  
 Goodwill to me as well as all—  
 I one of them : my brothers they :  
 Brothers in Christ—a world of peace  
 And confidence, day after day ;  
 And trust and hope till things should cease,  
 And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith !  
 To hold a common scorn of death !  
 And at a burial to hear  
 The creaking cords which wound and eat  
 Into my human heart, whene'er  
 Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,  
 With hopeful grief, were passing sweet !

Thrice happy state again to be  
 The trustful infant on the knee !  
 Who lets his rosy fingers play  
 About his mother's neck, and knows  
 Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.  
 They comfort him by night and day ;  
 They light his little life away ;  
 He hath no thought of coming woes,  
 He hath no care of life or death ;  
 Scarce outward signs of joy arise,  
 Because the Spirit of happiness

And perfect rest so inward is ;  
 And loveth so his innocent heart,  
 Her temple and her place of birth,  
 Where she would ever wish to dwell,  
 Life of the fountain there, beneath  
 Its salient springs, and far apart,  
 Hating to wander out on earth,  
 Or breathe into the hollow air,  
 Whose chillness would make visible  
 Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,  
 Which mixing with the infant's blood,  
 Fulfils him with beatitude.  
 Oh ! sure it is a special care  
 Of God, to fortify from doubt,  
 To arm in proof, and guard about  
 With triple-mailed trust, and clear  
 Delight, the infant's dawning year.

Would that my gloomed fancy were  
 As thine, my mother, when with brows  
 Propt on thy knees, my hands upheld  
 In thine, I listen'd to thy vows,  
 For me outpour'd in holiest prayer—  
 For me unworthy !—and beheld  
 Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew  
 The beauty and repose of faith,  
 And the clear spirit shining thro' .  
 Oh ! wherefore do we grow awry  
 From roots which strike so deep ? why  
 dare

Paths in the desert ? Could not I  
 Bow myself down, where thou hast knelt,  
 To the earth—until the ice would melt  
 Here, and I feel as thou hast felt ?  
 What Devil had the heart to scathe  
 Flowers thou hadst rear'd—to brush the  
 dew

From thine own lily, when thy grave  
 Was deep, my mother, in the clay ?  
 Myself ? Is it thus ? Myself ? Had I  
 So little love for thee ? But why  
 Prevail'd not thy pure prayers ? Why  
 pray

To one who heeds not, who can save  
 But will not ? Great in faith, and strong  
 Against the grief of circumstance  
 Wert thou, and yet unheard. What if  
 Thou pleadest still, and seest me drive  
 Thro' utter dark a full-sail'd skiff,  
 Unpiloted i' the echoing dance

Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low  
Unto the death, not sunk ! I know  
At matins and at evensong,  
That thou, if thou wert yet alive,  
In deep and daily prayers would'st strive  
To reconcile me with thy God.  
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold  
At heart, thou wouldest murmur still—  
'Bring this lamb back into Thy fold,  
My Lord, if so it be Thy will.'  
Would'st tell me I must brook the rod  
And chastisement of human pride ;  
That pride, the sin of devils, stood  
Betwixt me and the light of God !  
That hitherto I had defied  
And had rejected God—that grace  
Would diop from his o'er-brimming love,  
As manna on my wilderness,  
If I would pray—that God would move  
And strike the hard, hard rock, and thence,  
Sweet in their utmost bitterness,  
Would issue tears of penitence  
Which would keep green hope's life.  
Alas !

I think that pride hath now no place  
Nor sojourn in me. I am void,  
Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then ? Why not yet  
Anchor thy frailty there, where man  
Hath moor'd and rested ? Ask the sea  
At midnight, when the crisp slope waves  
After a tempest, rib and fret  
The broad-imbed beach, why he  
Slumbers not like a mountain tarn ?  
Wherefore his ridges are not curls  
And ripples of an inland mere ?  
Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can  
Draw down into his vexed pools  
All that blue heaven which hues and paves  
The other ? I am too forlorn,  
Too shaken : my own weakness fools  
My judgment, and my spirit whurls,  
Moved from beneath with doubt and fear.

'Yet,' said I, in my morn of youth,  
The unsunn'd freshness of my strength,  
When I went forth in quest of truth,  
'It is man's privilege to doubt,

If so be that from doubt at length,  
Truth may stand forth unmoved of change,  
An image with profulgent brows,  
And perfect limbs, as from the stoin  
Of running fires and fluid range  
Of lawless airs, at last stood out  
This excellence and solid form  
Of constant beauty. For the Ox  
Feeds in the herb, and sleeps, or fills  
The horned valleys all about,  
And hollows of the fringed hills  
In summer heats, with placid lows  
Unfearing, till his own blood flows  
About his hoof. And in the flocks  
The lamb rejoiceth in the year,  
And raceth freely with his fere,  
And answers to his mother's calls  
From the flower'd furrow In a time,  
Of which he wots not, run short pains  
Thro' his warm heart ; and then, from  
whence

He knows not, on his light there falls  
A shadow ; and his native slope,  
Where he was wont to leap and clumb,  
Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,  
And something in the darkness draws  
His forehead earthward, and he dies.  
Shall man live thus, in joy and hope  
As a young lamb, who cannot dream,  
Living, but that he shall live on ?  
Shall we not look into the laws  
Of life and death, and things that seem,  
And things that be, and analyse  
Our double nature, and compare  
All creeds till we have found the one,  
If one there be ?' Ay me ! I fear  
All may not doubt, but everywhere  
Some must clasp Idols Yet, my God,  
Whom call I Idol ? Let Thy dove  
Shadow me over, and my sins  
Be unremember'd, and Thy love  
Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet  
Somewhat before the heavy clod  
Weighs on me, and the busy fret  
Of that sharp-headed worm begins  
In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life ! O weary death !  
O spirit and heart made desolate !  
O damned vacillating state !

## THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thundeis of the upper deep ;  
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep  
The Kraken sleepeth : faintest sunlights  
flee

About his shadowy sides : above him swell  
Huge sponges of millennial growth and  
height ;

And far away into the sickly light,  
From many a wondrous grot and secret  
cell

Unnumber'd and enormous polypi  
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering  
green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie  
Battening upon huge seaworms in his  
sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep ;  
Then once by man and angels to be seen,  
In roaring he shall rise and on the sur-  
face die.

## SONG.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,  
Leaning upon the ridged sea,  
Breathed low around the rolling earth  
With mellow preludes, ' We are free.'

The streams through many a lilled row  
Down-carolling to the crisped sea,  
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow  
Atween the blossoms, ' We are free.'

## LILIAN.

## I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can ;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

## II.

When my passion seeks  
Pleasance in love-sighs,  
She, looking thro' and thro' me  
Thoroughly to undo me,  
Smiling, never speaks :  
So innocent-auch, so cunning-simple,  
From beneath her gathered wimple  
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,  
Till the lightning laughs dimple  
The baby-roses in her cheeks ;  
Then away she flies.

## III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !  
Gaiety without eclipse  
Wearieth me, May Lilian :  
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth  
When from crimson-threaded lips  
Silver-tieble laughter trilleth :  
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

## IV.

Praying all I can,  
If prayers will not hush thee,  
Airy Lilian,  
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,  
Fairy Lilian.

## ISABEL.

## I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright,  
but fed  
With the clear-pointed flame of chastity,  
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by  
Pure vestal thoughts in the trans-  
lucent fane  
Of her still spirit ; locks not wide-dispread,  
Madonna-wise on either side her  
head ;  
Sweet lips whereon perpetually did  
reign  
The summer calm of golden charity,  
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,  
Revered Isabel, the crown and head,  
The stately flower of female fortitude,  
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowli-  
head.

## II.

The intuitive decision of a bright  
And thorough-edged intellect to part  
Error from crime; a prudence to  
withhold;

The laws of marriage character'd in  
gold

Upon the blanched tablets of her heart;  
A love still burning upward, giving light  
To read those laws; an accent very low  
In blandishment, but a most silver flow

Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,  
Right to the heart and brain, tho' undescried,

Winning its way with extreme gentleness

Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride;  
A courage to endure and to obey;  
A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,  
Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,  
The queen of marriage, a most perfect  
wife.

## III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon;  
A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,  
Till in its onward current it absorbs  
With swifter movement and in purer  
light

The vexed eddies of its wayward  
brother:

A leaning and upbearing parasite,  
Clothing the stem, which else had  
fallen quite

With cluster'd flower-bells and ambrosial orbs

Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each  
other—

Shadow forth thee :—the world hath  
not another

(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of  
thee,

And thou of God in thy great charity)  
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

## MARIANA.

'Mariana in the moated grange'

*Measure for Measure.*

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots  
Were thickly crusted, one and all :  
The rusted nails fell from the knots  
That held the pear to the gable-wall.  
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :  
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;  
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
Upon the lonely moated grange.

She only said, ' My life is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am weary, weary,  
I would that I were dead !'

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;  
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried ;  
She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
Either at morn or eventide.

After the fitting of the bats,  
When thickest dark did tiance the sky,  
She drew her casement-curtain by,  
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.

She only said, ' The night is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am weary, weary,  
I would that I were dead !'

Upon the middle of the night,  
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :  
The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
From the dark fen the oxen's low  
Came to her : without hope of change,  
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,  
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed  
morn

About the lonely moated grange.  
She only said, ' The day is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am weary, weary,  
I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall  
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
And o'er it many, round and small,  
The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
 All silver-green with gnarled bark :  
 For leagues no other tree did mark  
 The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,  
 And the shrill winds were up and away,  
 In the white curtain, to and fro,  
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.  
 But when the moon was very low,  
 And wild winds bound within their cell,  
 The shadow of the poplar fell  
 Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, 'The night is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

All day within the dreamy house,  
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;  
 The blue fly sung in the pane ; the mouse  
 Behind the mouldering wainscot  
 shriek'd,

Or from the crevice peer'd about.  
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
 Old voices called her from without.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound  
 Which to the wooing wind aloof  
 The poplar made, did all confound  
 Her sense ; but most she loathed the hour  
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
 Athwart the chambers, and the day  
 Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then, said she, 'I am very dreary,  
 He will not come,' she said ;  
 She wept, 'I am weary, weary,  
 Oh God, that I were dead !'

## TO —.

### I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful scorn,  
 Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain  
 The knots that tangle human creeds,  
 The wounding cords that bind and strain  
 The heart until it bleeds,  
 Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn  
 Roof not a glance so keen as thine :  
 If aught of prophecy be mine,  
 Thou wilt not live in vain.

### II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;  
 Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow ;  
 Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now  
 With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.  
 Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords  
 Can do away that ancient lie ;  
 A gentler death shall Falsehood die,  
 Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

### III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,  
 Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,  
 Thy kingly intellect shall feed,  
 Until she be an athlete bold,  
 And weary with a finger's touch  
 Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;  
 Like that strange angel which of old,  
 Until the breaking of the light,  
 Wrestled with wandering Israel,  
 Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,  
 And heaven's mazed signs stood still  
 In the dim tract of Penuel.

## MADELINE.

### I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,  
 No tranced summer calm is thine,  
 Ever varying Madeline.  
 Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,  
 Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
 Delicious spites and darling angers,  
 And airy forms of flitting change.

## II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
 Thou art perfect in love-lore.  
 Revelings deep and clear are thine  
 Of wealthy smiles. but who may know  
 Whether smile or frown be fleetest?  
 Whether smile or frown be sweeter,

Who may know?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
 Light-glooming over eyes divine,  
 Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,  
 Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof  
 From one another,

Each to each is dearest brother;  
 Hues of the silken sheeny woof  
 Momently shot into each other.

All the mystery is thine;  
 Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
 Thou art perfect in love-lore,  
 Ever varying Madeline.

## III.

A subtle, sudden flame,  
 By veering passion fann'd,  
 About thee breaks and dances  
 When I would kiss thy hand,  
 The flush of anger'd shame

O'erflows thy calmer glances,  
 And o'er black brows drops down  
 A sudden-curved frown:

But when I turn away,  
 Thou, willing me to stay,  
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;  
 But, looking fixedly the while,  
 All my bounding heart entanglest  
 In a golden-netted smile;

Then in madness and in bliss,  
 If my lips should dare to kiss  
 Thy taper fingers amorously,  
 Again thou blushest angerly;  
 And o'er black brows drops down  
 A sudden-curved frown.

## SONG—THE OWL.

## I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,  
 And dew is cold upon the ground,

And the far-off stream is dumb,  
 And the whirring sail goes round,  
 And the whirring sail goes round;  
 Alone and warming his five wits,  
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

## II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,  
 And rarely smells the new-mown hay,  
 And the cock hath sung beneath the  
 thatch

Twice or thrice his roundelay,  
 Twice or thrice his roundelay;  
 Alone and warming his five wits,  
 The white owl in the belfry sits,

## SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

## I.

THY tuwhits are lull d, I wot,  
 Thy tuwwoos of yesternight,  
 Which upon the dark afloat,  
 So took echo with delight,  
 So took echo with delight,  
 That her voice untuneful grown,  
 Wears all day a fainter tone.

## II.

I would mock thy chaunt anew;  
 But I cannot mumick it;  
 Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,  
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew  
 free

In the silken sail of infancy,  
 The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
 The forward-flowing tide of time;  
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,

By Bagdat's shrines of fietted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old ;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'  
The low and bloomed foliage, drove  
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove  
The citron-shadows in the blue :  
By garden porches on the brim,  
The costly doors flung open wide,  
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,  
And broder'd sofas on each side :  
In sooth it was a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard  
The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay  
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept  
Adown to where the water slept.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won  
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,  
Until another night in night  
I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,  
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb  
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the  
dome  
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal  
Is rounded to as clear a lake.  
From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rillels musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake  
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.

A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn  
A walk with vary-colour'd shells  
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side  
All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase, and brazen urn  
In order, eastern flowers large,  
Some dropping low their crimson bells  
Half-closed, and others studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fed the time  
With odour in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove  
In closest coverture upsprung,  
The living airs of middle night  
Died round the bulb as he sung ;  
Not he · but something which possess'd  
The darkness of the world, delight,  
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,  
Ceasing not, mingled, unexpress'd,  
Apart from place, withholding time,  
But flattering the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots  
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged  
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :  
A sudden splendour from behind  
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,  
And, flowing rapidly between  
Their interspaces, counterchanged  
The level lake with diamond-plots  
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,  
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,  
Grew darker from that under-flame :  
So, leaping lightly from the boat,  
With silver anchor left afloat,  
In marvel whence that glory came  
Upon me, as in sleep I sank  
In cool soft turf upon the bank,  
Entranced with that place and time,  
So worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—  
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
 And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
 Full of the city's stilly sound,  
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round  
 The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
     Graven with emblems of the time,  
     In honour of the golden prime  
     Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares  
 From the long alley's latticed shade  
 Emerged, I came upon the great  
 Pavilion of the Caliphate.  
 Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
 Flung inward over spangled floors,  
 Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
 Ran up with golden balustrade,  
     After the fashion of the time,  
     And humour of the golden prime  
     Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The founscore windows all alight  
 As with the quintessence of flame,  
 A million tapers flaring bright  
 From twisted silvers look'd to shame  
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd  
 Upon the mooned domes aloof  
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd  
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof  
     Of night new-risen, that marvellous time  
     To celebrate the golden prime  
     Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly  
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,  
 Serene with argent-lidded eyes  
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays  
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl  
 Tressed with redolent ebony,  
 In many a dark delicious curl,  
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;  
     The sweetest lady of the time,  
     Well worthy of the golden prime  
     Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,  
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
 Throne of the massive ore, from which

Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,  
 Engarlanded and diaper'd  
 With wrought flowers, a cloth of gold.  
 Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stir'd  
 With merriment of kingly pride,  
     Sole star of all that place and time,  
 I saw him—in his golden prime,  
     THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

## ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO —

## I.

THOU who stealest fire,  
 From the fountains of the past,  
 To glorify the present; oh, haste,  
     Visit my low desire !  
 Strengthen me, enlighten me !  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## II

Come not as thou camest of late,  
 Flung the gloom of yesternight  
 On the white day; but robed in soften'd  
     light  
     Of orient state  
 Whilome thou camest with the morning  
     mist,  
 Even as a maid, whose stately brow  
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn have  
     kiss'd,  
     When, she, as thou,  
 Stays on her floating locks the lovely flight  
 Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots  
 Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,  
 Which in wintertide shall star  
 The black earth with brilliance rare.

## III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning  
     mist,  
 And with the evening cloud,  
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my  
     open breast  
 (Those peerless flowers which in the  
     rudest wind  
     Never grow sere,

When rooted in the garden of the mind,  
 Because they are the earliest of the year).  
 Nor was the night thy shroud.  
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest  
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant  
 Hope.  
 The eddying of her garments caught from  
 thee  
 The light of thy great presence ; and the  
 cope  
 Of the half-attain'd futurity,  
 Tho' deep not fathomless,  
 Was cloven with the million stars which  
 tremble  
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.  
 Small thought was there of life's distress ;  
 For sure she deem'd no must of earth  
 could dull  
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and  
 beautiful .  
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,  
 Listening the lordly music flowing from  
 The illimitable years.  
 O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,  
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad  
 eyes !  
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunting  
 vines  
 Unto mine inner eye,  
 Divinest Memory !  
 Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall  
 Which ever sounds and shines  
 A pillar of white light upon the wall  
 Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :  
 Come from the woods that belt the gray  
 hill-side,  
 The seven elms, the poplars four  
 That stand beside my father's door,  
 And chiefly from the brook that loves  
 To purr o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,  
 Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,  
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,  
 In every elbow and turn,  
 The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland,  
 O ! hither lead thy feet !

Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat  
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled  
 folds,  
 Upon the ridged wolds,  
 When the first matin-song hath waken'd  
 loud  
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
 What time the amber morn  
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung  
 cloud.

## v.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
 To the young spirit present  
 When first she is wed ;  
 And like a bride of old  
 In triumph led,  
 With music and sweet showers  
 Of festal flowers,  
 Unto the dwelling she must sway.  
 Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,  
 In setting round thy first experiment  
 With royal frame-work of wrought  
 gold ;  
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first  
 essay,  
 And foremost in thy various gallery  
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls  
 Upon the storied walls ;  
 For the discovery  
 And newness of thine art so pleased thee,  
 That all which thou hast drawn of fairest  
 Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
 With thee unto the love thou bearest  
 The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,  
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze  
 On the prime labour of thine early days :  
 No matter what the sketch might be ;  
 Whether the high field on the bushless  
 Pike,  
 Or even a sand-built ridge  
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,  
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see  
 Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-  
 mous marsh,  
 Where from the frequent bridge,  
 Like emblems of infinity,  
 The trenched waters run from sky to sky,  
 Or a garden bower'd close

With platted alleys of the trailing rose,  
 Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,  
 Or opening upon level plots  
 Of crowned lilies, standing near  
 Purple-spiked lavender :  
 Whither in after life retired  
 From brawling storms,  
 From weary wind,  
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,

We may hold converse with all forms  
 Of the many-sided mind,  
 And those whom passion hath not blinded,  
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,  
 Were how much better than to own  
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !

O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## SONG.

### I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
 Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :  
 To himself he talks ;  
 For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
 At his work you may hear him sob and  
 sigh  
 In the walks ;  
 Earthward he boweth the heavy  
 stalks  
 Of the mouldering flowers :  
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
 Over its grave ! ' the earth so chilly ;  
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

### II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
 As a sick man's room when he taketh  
 repose  
 An hour before death ;  
 My very heart faints and my whole soul  
 grieves  
 At the moist rich smell of the rotting  
 leaves,

And the breath  
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
 And the year's last rose  
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
 Over its grave ! ' the earth so chilly ;  
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky  
 At night he said, ' The wanderings  
 Of this most intricate Universe  
 Teach me the nothingness of things.'  
 Yet could not all creation pierce  
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty : that the dull  
 Saw no divinity in grass,  
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;  
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,  
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,  
 And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue : not the gods  
 More purely, when they wish to charm  
 Pallas and Juno sitting by :  
 And with a sweeping of the arm,  
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,  
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour  
 He canvass'd human mysteries,  
 And trod on silk, as if the winds  
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,  
 And stood aloof from other minds  
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,  
 Himself unto himself he sold :  
 Upon himself himself did feed :  
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,  
 And other than his form of creed,  
 With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

## THE POET

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
 With golden stars above ;  
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn  
 of scorn,  
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good  
and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul,  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he  
threaded

The secretest walks of fame :  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were  
headed  
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver  
tongue,

And of so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which  
bore

Them earthward till they lit ;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field  
flower,  
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth  
anew

Where'er they fell, behold,  
Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
grew  
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling  
The winged shafts of truth,  
To throng with stately blooms the breath-  
ing spring  
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with  
beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.  
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
dreams  
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
world

Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
upcurl'd,  
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise  
Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burning  
eyes  
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes  
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;  
But round about the circles of the globes  
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in  
flame

WISDOM, a name to shake  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.  
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,  
And as the lightning to the thunder  
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,  
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No  
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,  
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*  
word  
She shook the world.

## THE POET'S MIND.

### I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind  
With thy shallow wit .  
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;  
For thou canst not fathom it.  
Clear and bright it should be ever,  
Flowing like a crystal river ;  
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

### II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;  
All the place is holy ground ;  
Hollow smile and frozen sneer  
Come not here.  
Holy water will I pour  
Into every spicy flower  
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.  
The flowers would faint at your cruel  
cheer.

In your eye there is death,  
 There is frost in your breath  
 Which would blight the plants.  
     Where you stand you cannot hear  
     From the groves within  
     The wild-bird's din.  
 In the heart of the garden the merry bird  
 chants.  
 It would fall to the ground if you came  
 in.  
     In the middle leaps a fountain  
     Like sheet lightning,  
     Ever brightening  
     With a low melodious thunder ;  
 All day and all night it is ever drawn  
     From the brain of the purple mountain  
     Which stands in the distance yonder .  
 It springs on a level of bowery lawn,  
 And the mountain draws it from Heaven  
 above,  
 And it sings a song of undying love ;  
 And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and  
 full,  
 You never would hear it ; your ears are  
 so dull ;  
 So keep where you are : you are foul with  
 sin ;  
 It would shrink to the earth if you came  
 in.

## THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,  
 Betwixt the green brink and the running  
 foam,  
 Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms  
 priest  
 To little haups of gold ; and while they  
 mused  
 Whispering to each other half in fear,  
 Shrill music reach'd them on the middle  
 sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither  
 away ? fly no more.  
 Whither away from the high green field,  
 and the happy blossoming shore ?  
 Day and night to the billow the fountain  
 calls :

Down shower the gambolling waterfalls  
 From wandering over the lea :  
 Out of the live-green heart of the dells  
 They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,  
 And thick with white bells the clover-hill  
 swells

High over the full-toned sea :  
 O hither, come hither and furl your sails,  
 Come hither to me and to me :  
 Hither, come hither and frolic and play ;  
 Here it is only the mew that wails ;  
 We will sing to you all the day :  
 Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,  
 For here are the blissful downs and dales,  
 And merrily, merrily carol the gales,  
 And the spangle dances in bight and bay,  
 And the rainbow forms and flies on the  
 land

Over the islands free ;  
 And the rainbow lives in the curve of the  
 sand ;  
 Hither, come hither and see ;  
 And the rainbow hangs on the poisoning  
 wave,  
 And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,  
 And sweet shall your welcome be .  
 O hither, come hither, and be our lords,  
 For merry brides are we :  
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak  
 sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 With pleasure and love and jubilee :  
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 When the sharp clear twang of the golden  
 chords  
 Runs up the ridged sea.  
 Who can light on as happy a shore  
 All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?  
 Whither away ? listen and stay : mariner,  
 mariner, fly no more.

## THE DESERTED HOUSE.

## I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away  
 Side by side,  
 Leaving door and windows wide :  
 Careless tenants they !

## II.

All within is dark as night :  
In the windows is no-light ;  
And no murmur at the door,  
So frequent on its hinge before.

## III.

Close the door, the shutters close,  
Or thro' the windows we shall see  
The nakedness and vacancy  
Of the dark deserted house.

## IV.

Come away : no more of mirth  
Is here or merry-making sound.  
The house was builded of the earth,  
And shall fall again to ground.

## V.

Come away : for Life and Thought  
Here no longer dwell ;  
But in a city glorious—  
A great and distant city—have bought  
A mansion incorruptible.  
Would they could have stayed with us !

## THE DYING SWAN.

## I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
Which had built up everywhere  
An under-roof of doleful gray.  
With an inner voice the river ran,  
Adown it floated a dying swan,  
And loudly did lament.  
It was the middle of the day.  
Ever the weary wind went on,  
And took the reed-tops as it went.

## II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
And white against the cold-white sky,  
Shone out their crowning snows.  
One willow over the river wept,  
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ;  
Above in the wind was the swallow,

Chasing itself at its own wild will,  
And far thro' the marsh green and still

The tangled water-courses slept,  
Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

## III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul  
Of that waste place with joy  
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
The warble was low, and full and clear ;  
And floating about the under-sky,  
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach  
stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;  
But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
With a music strange and manifold,  
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;  
As when a mighty people rejoice  
With shawms, and with cymbals, and  
harps of gold,  
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd  
Thro' the open gates of the city afar,  
To the shepherd who watcheth the even-  
ing star.

And the creeping mosses and clambering  
weeds,  
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,  
And the wavy swell of the soughing  
reeds,  
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing  
bank,  
And the silvery marsh-flowers that  
throng  
The desolate creeks and pools among,  
Were flooded over with eddying song.

## A DIRGE.

## I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;  
Fold thy palms across thy breast,  
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest  
Let them rave.  
Shadows of the silver birk  
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

II

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
Nothing but the small cold worm  
Fietteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
Chaunteth not the brooding bee  
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head  
From the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
The woodbine and eglare  
Drip sweeter dew than traitor's tear.

Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave.

These in every shower creep  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;  
The frail bluebell peereth over  
Rare broidry of the purple clove.

Let them rave.

Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy memory confused :

But let them rave.

The balm-cricket carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was gather-  
ing light

Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,  
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;  
When, turning round a cassia, full in view,  
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,  
And talking to himself, first met his sight :

' You must begone,' said Death, ' these  
walks are mine.'

Love wept and spread his sheeny vans  
for flight ;

Yet ere he parted said, ' This hour is  
thine '

Thou art the shadow of life, and as the  
tree

Stands in the sun and shadows all be-  
neath,

So in the light of great eternity  
Life eminent creates the shade of death ;  
The shadow passeth when the tree shall  
fall,

But I shall reign for ever over all.'

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

MY heart is wasted with my woe,  
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,  
Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with  
snow,

And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,  
Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,  
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,  
Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,  
Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,  
We heard the steeds to battle going,  
          Oriana ;  
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,  
          Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,  
          Oriana,  
Ere I rode into the fight,  
          Oriana,  
While blissful tears blinded my sight  
By star-shine and by moonlight,  
          Oriana,  
I to thee my troth did plight,  
          Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,  
          Oriana :  
She watch'd my crest among them all,  
          Oriana .  
She saw me fight, she heard me call,  
When forth there stept a foeman tall,  
          Oriana,  
Atween me and the castle wall,  
          Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,  
          Oriana :  
The false, false arrow went aside,  
          Oriana :  
The damned arrow glanced aside,  
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,  
          Oriana !  
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
          Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,  
          Oriana.  
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,  
          Oriana.  
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,  
The battle deepen'd in its place,  
          Oriana ;  
But I was down upon my face,  
          Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,  
          Oriana !  
How could I rise and come away,  
          Oriana ?

How could I look upon the day ?  
They should have stabb'd me where I lay,  
          Oriana—  
They should have trod me into clay,  
          Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,  
          Oriana !  
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,  
          Oriana !  
Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,  
And then the tears run down my cheek,  
          Oriana :  
What wantest thou? whom dost thou seek,  
          Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,  
          Oriana.  
Thou comest atween me and the skies,  
          Oriana.  
I feel the tears of blood arise  
Up from my heart unto my eyes,  
          Oriana.  
Within thy heart my arrow lies,  
          Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !  
          Oriana !  
O happy thou that liest low,  
          Oriana !  
All night the silence seems to flow  
Beside me in my utter woe,  
          Oriana.  
A weary, weary way I go,  
          Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,  
          Oriana,  
I walk, I dare not think of thee,  
          Oriana.  
Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,  
I dare not die and come to thee,  
          Oriana.  
I hear the roaring of the sea,  
          Oriana.

## CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbour villages  
Playing mad pranks along the heathy leas ;

Two strangers meeting at a festival ;  
 Two lovers whispering by an orchard  
 wall ;  
 Two lives bound fast in one with golden  
 ease ;  
 Two graves grass-green beside a gray  
 church-tower,  
 Wash'd with still rains and daisy blos-  
 somed ;  
 Two children in one hamlet born and  
 bred ;  
 So runs the round of life from hour to  
 hour.

## THE MERMAN.

## I.

WHO would be  
 A merman bold,  
 Sitting alone,  
 Singing alone  
 Under the sea,  
 With a crown of gold,  
 On a throne ?

## II.

I would be a merman bold,  
 I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;  
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of  
 power ;  
 But at night I would roam abroad and  
 play  
 With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,  
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
 flower ;  
 And holding them back by their flowing  
 locks  
 I would kiss them often under the sea,  
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
 Laughingly, laughingly ;  
 And then we would wander away, away  
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and  
 high,  
 Chasing each other merrily.

## III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;  
 But the wave would make music above  
 us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic  
 night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,  
 Call to each other and whoop and cry

All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with starry spangles  
 and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands be-  
 tween,

All night, merrily, merrily :

But I would throw to them back in mine

Turkis and agate and almondine :

Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd me

Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh ! what a happy life were mine

Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;

We would live merrily, merrily.

## THE MERMAID.

## I.

WHO would be  
 A mermaid fair,  
 Singing alone,  
 Combing her hair  
 Under the sea,  
 In a golden curl  
 With a comb of pearl,  
 On a throne ?

## II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;  
 I would sing to myself the whole of the  
 day ;  
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my  
 hair ;  
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and  
 say,  
 ' Who is it loves me ? who loves not me ?'  
 I would comb my hair till my tangles  
 would fall

Low adown, low adown,

From under my starry sea-bud crown

Low adown and around,

And I should look like a fountain of gold

Springing alone  
 With a shrill inner sound,  
 Over the throne  
 In the midst of the hall ;  
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps  
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
 Round the hall where I sate, and look  
 in at the gate  
 With his large calm eyes for the love of  
 me.  
 And all the mermen under the sea  
 Would feel their immortality  
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

## III.

But at night I would wander away, away,  
 I would fling on each side my low-  
 flowing locks,  
 And lightly vault from the throne and play  
 With the mermen in and out of the  
 rocks ;  
 We would run to and fro, and hide and  
 seek,  
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson  
 shells,  
 Whose silverspikes are nighest the sea.  
 But if any came near I would call, and  
 shriek,  
 And adown the steep like a wave I would  
 leap  
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from  
 the dells ;  
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who  
 would list,  
 Of the bold merry mermen under the  
 sea ;  
 They would sue me, and woo me, and  
 flatter me,  
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;  
 But the king of them all would carry me,  
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
 In the branching jaspers under the sea ;  
 Then all the dry pied things that be  
 In the hueless mosses under the sea  
 Would curl round my silver feet silently,  
 All looking up for the love of me.  
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
 All things that are forked, and horned,  
 and soft

Would lean out from the hollow sphere  
 of the sea,  
 All looking down for the love of me.

## ADELINE.

## I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,  
 Faintly smiling Adeline,  
 Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
 Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
 But beyond expression fair  
 With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
 Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
 Take the heart from out my breast.  
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

## II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,  
 Like a lily which the sun  
 Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
 And a rose-bush leans upon,  
 Thou that faintly smilest still,  
 As a Naiad in a well,  
 Looking at the set of day,  
 Or a phantom two hours old  
 Of a maiden past away,  
 Ere the placid lips be cold ?  
 Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,  
 Spiritual Adeline ?

## III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?  
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?  
 For sure thou art not all alone.  
 Do beating hearts of salient springs  
 Keep measure with thine own ?  
 Hast thou heard the butterflies  
 What they say betwixt their wings ?  
 Or in stillest evenings  
 With what voice the violet woos  
 To his heart the silver dews ?  
 Or when little airs arise,  
 How the merry bluebell rings  
 To the mosses underneath ?  
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath  
 Of the lilies at sunrise ?

Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

## IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
Some spirit of a crimson rose  
In love with thee forgets to close  
His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
All night long on darkness blind.  
What aileth thee? whom waitest thou  
With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

## V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
When thou gazest at the skies?  
Doth the low-tongued Orient  
Wander from the side of the morn,  
Dripping with Sabæan spice  
On thy pillow, lowly bent  
With melodious airs lovelorn,  
Breathing Light against thy face,  
While his locks a-drooping twined  
Round thy neck in subtle ring  
Make a carcanet of rays,  
And ye talk together still,  
In the language wherewith Spring  
Letters cowshps on the hill?  
Hence that look and smile of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline.

## MARGARET.

## I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
What lit your eyes with tearful power,  
Like moonlight on a falling shower?  
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower  
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,  
Your melancholy sweet and frail  
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?  
From the westward-winding flood,  
From the evening-lighted wood,  
From all things outward you have  
won  
A tearful grace, as tho' you stood  
Between the rainbow and the sun.

The very smile before you speak,  
That dimples your transparent cheek,  
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
The senses with a still delight  
Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
Like the tender amber sound,  
Which the moon about her spreadeth,  
Moving thro' a fleecy night.

## II.

You love, remaining peacefully,  
To hear the murmur of the stife,  
But enter not the toil of life.  
Your spirit is the calmed sea,  
Laid by the tumult of the fight.  
You are the evening star, alway  
Remaining betwixt dark and bright.  
Lull'd echoes of laborious day  
Come to you, gleams of mellow light  
Float by you on the verge of night

## III.

What can it matter, Margaret,  
What songs below the waning stars  
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,  
Sang looking thro' his prison bars?  
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so well?

## IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made  
And gave you on your natal day.  
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,  
Keeps real sorrow far away.  
You move not in such solitudes,  
You are not less divine,  
But more human in your moods,  
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.  
Your hair is darker, and your eyes  
Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue,  
And less aërially blue,  
But ever trembling thro' the dew  
Of dainty-woeful sympathies.

## V.

O sweet pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,

Come down, come down, and hear me  
speak :

Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :

The sun is just about to set,  
The arching limes are tall and shady,  
And faint, rainy lights are seen,  
Moving in the leavy beech.

Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,  
Where all day long you sit between  
Joy and woe, and whisper each.

Or only look across the lawn,  
Look out below your bower-eaves,  
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn  
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

### ROSALIND.

#### I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,  
Whose free delight, from any height of  
rapid flight,  
Stoops at all game that wing the skies,  
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whither,  
Careless both of wind and weather,  
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,  
Up or down the streaming wind?

#### II.

The quick lark's closest-caroll'd strains,  
The shadow rushing up the sea,  
The lightning flash between the rains,  
The sunlight driving down the lea,  
The leaping stream, the very wind,  
That will not stay, upon his way,  
To stoop the cowslip to the plains,  
Is not so clear and bold and free  
As you, my falcon Rosalind.  
You care not for another's pains,  
Because you are the soul of joy,  
Bright metal all without alloy.  
Life shoots and glances thro' your veins,  
And flashes off a thousand ways,  
Thro' lips and eyes in subtle rays.  
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,  
Keen with triumph, watching still  
To pierce me thro' with pointed light ;  
But oftentimes they flash and glitter

Like sunshine on a dancing rill,  
And your words are seeming-bitter,  
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter  
From excess of swift delight.

#### III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,  
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind :  
Too long you keep the upper skies ;  
Too long you roam and wheel at will ;  
But we must hood your random eyes,  
That care not whom they kill,  
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue  
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,  
Some red heath-flower in the dew,  
Touch'd with sunrise. We must bind  
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,  
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,  
And clip your wings, and make you love :  
When we have lured you from above,  
And that delight of frolic flight, by day  
or night,  
From North to South,  
We'll bind you fast in silken cords,  
And kiss away the bitter words,  
From off your rosy mouth.

### ELEÄNORE.

#### I.

Thy dark eyes open'd not,  
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English  
air,  
For there is nothing here,  
Which, from the outward to the inward  
brought,  
Moulded thy baby thought.  
Far off from human neighbourhood,  
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,  
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd  
With breezes from our oaken glades,  
But thou wert nursed in some delicious  
land  
Of lavish lights, and floating shades :  
And flattering thy childish thought  
The oriental fairy brought,  
At the moment of thy birth,

From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
And the hearts of purple hills,  
And shadow'd coves on a sunny  
shore,  
The choicest wealth of all the  
earth,  
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
To deck thy cradle, Eleanore.

## II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,  
Thro' half-open lattices  
Coming in the scented breeze,  
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,  
With whitest honey in fairy gar-  
dens cull'd—  
A glorious child, dreaming alone,  
Insilk-soft folds, uponyielding down,  
With the hum of swarming bees  
Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

## III.

Who may minister to thee?  
Summer herself should minister  
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded  
On golden salvers, or it may be,  
Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
Grape-thicken'd from the light, and  
blinded  
With many a deep-hued bell-like  
flower

Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
And the crag that fronts the Even,  
All along the shadowing shore,  
Crimsons over an inland meire,  
Eleanore!

## IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
How may measured words adore  
The full-flowing harmony  
Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
Eleanore?  
The luxuriant symmetry  
Of thy floating gracefulness,  
Eleanore?  
Every turn and glance of thine,  
Every lineament divine,  
Eleanore,

And the steady sunset glow,  
That stays upon thee? For in thee  
Is nothing sudden, nothing single;  
Like two streams of incense free  
From one censer in one shrine,  
Thought and motion mingle,  
Mingle ever. Motions flow  
To one another, even as tho'  
They were modulated so  
To an unheard melody,  
Which lives about thee, and a sweep  
Of richest pauses, evermore  
Drawn from each other mellow-deep;  
Who may express thee, Eleanore?

## V.

I stand before thee, Eleanore;  
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,  
Daily and hourly, more and more.  
I muse, as in a trance, the while  
Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,  
Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.  
I muse, as in a trance, when'er  
The languors of thy love-deep eyes  
Float on to me. I would I were  
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,  
To stand apart, and to adore,  
Gazing on thee for evermore,  
Serene, imperial Eleanore!

## VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity  
Gazing, I seem to see  
Thought folded over thought, smiling  
asleep,  
Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,  
I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
But am as nothing in its light:  
As tho' a star, in immost heaven set,  
Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
Should slowly round his orb, and slowly  
grow  
To a full face, there like a sun remain  
Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
And draw itself to what it was  
before;  
So full, so deep, so slow,  
Thought seems to come and go  
In thy large eyes, imperial Eleanore.

## VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,  
 Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,  
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,  
 Grow golden all about the sky ;  
 In thee all passion becomes passionless,  
 Touch'd by thy spilt's mellowness,  
 Losing his fire and active might  
 In a silent meditation,  
 Falling into a still delight,  
 And luxury of contemplation .  
 As waves that up a quiet cove  
 Rolling slide, and lying still  
 Shadow forth the banks at will :  
 Or sometimes they swell and move,  
 Pressing up against the land,  
 With motions of the outer sea .  
 And the self-same influence  
 Controlleth all the soul and sense  
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.  
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,  
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,  
 And so would languish evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleanore.

## VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses  
 unconfined,  
 While the amorous, odorous wind  
 Breathes low between the sunset and  
 the moon ;  
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
 On silken cushions half reclined ;  
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place  
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,  
 While I muse upon thy face ;  
 And a languid fire creeps  
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon  
 From thy rose-red lips MY name  
 Floweth ; and then, as in a swoon,  
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,  
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,  
 I lose my colour, I lose my breath,  
 I drink the cup of a costly death,  
 Brimm'd with delinious draughts of warm-  
 est life.

I die with my delight, before  
 I hear what I would hear from  
 thee ;

Yet tell my name again to me,  
 I *would* be dying evermore,  
 So dying ever, Eleanore.

## I.

My life is full of weary days,  
 But good things have not kept aloof,  
 Nor wander'd into other ways :  
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,  
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink  
 Of that deep grave to which I go :  
 Shake hands once more : I cannot sink  
 So far—far down, but I shall know  
 Thy voice, and answer from below.

## II.

When in the darkness over me  
 The four-handed mole shall scape,  
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,  
 Nor wreath thy cap with doleful crape,  
 But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood  
 Grow green beneath the showery gray,  
 And rugged barks begin to bud,  
 And thro' damp holts new-flush'd with  
 may,  
 Ring sudden scritchings of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,  
 And on my clay her darnel grow ;  
 Come only, when the days are still,  
 And at my headstone whisper low,  
 And tell me if the woodbines blow.

## EARLY SONNETS.

## I.

TO —.

As when with downcast eyes we muse and  
 brood,  
 And ebb into a former life, or seem  
 To lapse far back in some confused dream

To states of mystical similitude ;  
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,  
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,  
 So that we say, 'All this hath been before,  
 And all this hath been, I know not when or  
     where.'  
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon your  
     face,  
 Our thought gave answer each to each, so  
     true—  
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—  
 That tho' I knew not in what time or place,  
 Methought that I had often met with you,  
 And either lived in either's heart and  
     speech.

## II.

TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou  
     wilt be  
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
 To scare church-harpies from the master's  
     feast ;  
 Our dusted velvets have much need of  
     these :  
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,  
 Distill'd from some worm - canker'd  
     homily ;  
 But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy  
 To embattail and to wall about thy cause  
 With iron-worded proof, hating to hark  
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone  
 Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-  
     out clerk  
 Bow-beats his desk below. Thou from  
     a throne  
 Mounted on heaven wilt shoot into the  
     dark  
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and  
     mark.

## III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full and  
     free,  
 Like some broad river rushing down  
     alone,  
 With the selfsame impulse wherewith he  
     was thrown  
 From his loud fount upon the echoing  
     lea :—

Which with increasing might doth forward  
     flee  
 By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,  
     and isle,  
 And in the middle of the green salt sea  
 Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a mile.  
 Mine be the power which ever to its sway  
 Will win the wise at once, and by degrees  
 May into uncongenial spirits flow ;  
 Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of Florida  
 Floats far away into the Northern seas  
 The lavish growths of southern Mexico.

## IV.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right  
     arm debased  
 The throne of Persia, when her Satrap  
     bled  
 At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled  
 Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, dis-  
     graced  
 For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-erased)  
 Gliding with equal crowns two serpents  
     led  
 Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed  
 Ammonian Oasis in the waste.  
 There in a silent shade of laurel brown  
 Apart the Chaman Oracle divine  
 Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries :  
 High things were spoken there, unhanded  
     down ;  
 Only they saw thee from the secret shrine  
 Returning with hot cheek and kindled  
     eyes.

## V.

BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts  
     of oak,  
 Madman !—to chain with chains, and bind  
     with bands  
 That island queen who sways the floods  
     and lands  
 From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,  
 When from her wooden walls,—lit by  
     sure hands,—  
 With thunders, and with lightnings, and  
     with smoke,—

Peal after peal, the British battle broke,  
Lulling the brine against the Coptic sands  
We taught him lowlier moods, when El-  
sinore

Heard the war moan along the distant sea,  
Rocking with shatter'd spars, with sudden  
fires

Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more  
We taught him : late he learned humility  
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd  
with briers.

## VI.

## POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden  
down,

And trampled under by the last and least  
Of men ? The heart of Poland hath not  
ceased

To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth  
drown

The fields, and out of every smouldering  
town

Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-  
creased,

Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East  
Transgress his ample bound to some new  
crown :—

Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall  
these things be ?

How long this icy-hearted Muscovite  
Oppress the region ?' Us, O Just and  
Good,

Forgive, who smiled when she was torn  
in three ;

Us, who stand now, when we should aid  
the right—

A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

## VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender hand,  
And singing airy trifles this or that,  
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch  
and stand,

And run thro' every change of sharp and  
flat ;

And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,  
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy  
band,

And chased away the still-recurring gnat,  
And woke her with a lay from fairy land.  
But now they live with Beauty less and  
less,

For Hope is other Hope and wanders far,  
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious creeds ;  
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,  
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,  
That sets at twilight in a land of reeds.

## VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent !  
A nobler yearning never broke her rest  
Than but to dance and sing, be gaily  
drest,

And win all eyes with all accomplish-  
ment :

Yet in the whirling dances as we went,  
My fancy made me for a moment blest  
To find my heart so near the beauteous  
breast

That once had power to rob it of content.  
A moment came the tenderness of tears,  
The phantom of a wish that once could  
move,

A ghost of passion that no smiles re-  
store—

For ah ! the slight coquette, she cannot  
love,

And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand  
years,

She still would take the praise, and care  
no more.

## IX.

WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take the  
cast

Of those dead lineaments that near thee  
lie ?

O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the  
past,

In painting some dead friend from memory ?  
Weep on : beyond his object Love can  
last :

His object lives : more cause to weep  
have I :

My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,  
No tears of love, but tears that Love can  
die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,

Nor care to sit beside her where she sits—  
 Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,  
 But breathe it into earth and close it up  
 With secret death for ever, in the pits  
 Which some green Christmas crams with  
 weary bones.

## X.

IF I were loved, as I desire to be,  
 What is there in the great sphere of the  
 earth,  
 And range of evil between death and birth,  
 That I should fear,—if I were loved by  
 thee?  
 All the inner, all the outer world of pain  
 Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if  
 thou wert mine,  
 As I have heard that, somewhere in the  
 main,  
 Fresh-water springs come up through  
 bitter brine.  
 'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand  
 with thee,  
 To wait for death—mute—careless of all  
 ills,  
 Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge  
 Of some new deluge from a thousand hills  
 Flung leagues of roaring foam into the  
 gorge  
 Below us, as far on as eye could see.

## XI.

## THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was  
 tied,  
 Thine eyes so wept that they could hardly  
 see;  
 Thy sister smiled and said, 'No tears for  
 me!  
 A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride.'  
 And then, the couple standing side by  
 side,  
 Love lighted down between them full of  
 glee,  
 And over his left shoulder laugh'd at  
 thee,  
 'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy  
 bride.'  
 And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,  
 For while the tender service made thee  
 weep,  
 I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not  
 hude,  
 And prest thy hand, and knew the press  
 return'd,  
 And thought, 'My life is sick of single  
 sleep:  
 O happy bridesmaid, make a happy  
 bride!'

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT

## AND OTHER POEMS.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

## PART I.

ON either side the river lie  
 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
 And thro' the field the road runs by  
 To many-tower'd Camelot;  
 And up and down the people go,  
 Gazing where the lilies blow  
 Round an island there below,  
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
 By the island in the river  
 Flowing down to Camelot.  
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle imbowers  
 The Lady of Shalott

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd

By slow horses ; and unhail'd  
 The shallop flutteth silken-sail'd  
     Skimming down to Camelot :  
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
     The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early  
 In among the bearded barley,  
 Hear a song that echoes cheerily  
 From the river winding clearly,  
     Down to tower'd Camelot :  
 And by the moon the reaper weary,  
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
 Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy  
     Lady of Shalott.'

## PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
 A magic web with colours gay.  
 She has heard a whisper say,  
 A curse is on her if she stay  
     To look down to Camelot.  
 She knows not what the curse may be,  
 And so she weaveth steadily,  
 And little other care hath she,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
 That hangs before her all the year,  
 Shadows of the world appear.  
 There she sees the highway near  
     Winding down to Camelot :  
 There the river eddy whirls,  
 And there the surly village-churls,  
 And the red cloaks of market girls,  
     Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
 An abbot on an ambling pad,  
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
     Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;  
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
 The knights come riding two and two :  
 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
 To weave the mirror's magic sights,

For often thro' the silent nights  
 A funeral, with plumes and lights  
     And music, went to Camelot :  
 Or when the moon was overhead,  
 Came two young lovers lately wed ;  
 'I am half sick of shadows,' said  
     The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,  
 He rode between the bailey-sheaves,  
 The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,  
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
     Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
 To a lady in his shield,  
 That sparkled on the yellow field,  
     Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
 Like to some banch of stars we see  
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
 The bndle bells rang merrily  
     As he rode down to Camelot :  
 And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
 A mighty silver bugle hung,  
 And as he rode his armour rung,  
     Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
 The helmet and the helmet-feather  
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
     As he rode down to Camelot.  
 As often thro' the purple night,  
 Below the starry clusters bright,  
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
     Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;  
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;  
 From underneath his helmet flow'd  
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
     As he rode down to Camelot.  
 From the bank and from the river  
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
 'Tirra lirra,' by the river  
     Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces thro' the room,

She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide ;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;  
'The curse is come upon me,' cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complain-  
ing,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot ;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance  
Dad she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Thro' the noises of the night  
She floated down to Camelot :  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this ? and what is here ?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer ;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot :  
But Lancelot mused a little space ;  
He said, 'She has a lovely face ;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott.'

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
The house thro' all the level shines,  
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
And silent in its dusty vines :  
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
An empty river-bed before,  
And shallows on a distant shore,  
In glaring sand and inlets bright.  
But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,  
And 'Ave Mary,' night and morn,  
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,  
'Tolive forgotten, and love forlorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
From brow and bosom slowly down  
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
Her steaming curls of deepest brown  
To left and right, and made appear  
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
Her melancholy eyes divine,  
The home of woe without a tear.  
And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,  
'Madonna, sad is night and morn,'  
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,  
'Tolive forgotten, and love forlorn.'

Till all the crimson changed, and past  
Into deep orange o'er the sea,

Low on her knees herself she cast,  
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;  
 Complaining, 'Mother, give me grace  
 To help me of my weary load.'  
 And on the liquid murmur glow'd  
 The clear perfection of her face.

'Is this the form,' she made her  
 moan,

'That won his praises night and  
 morn ;'

And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake  
 alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.'

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,  
 Nor any cloud would cross the vault,  
 But day increased from heat to heat,  
 On stony drought and steaming salt ;  
 Till now at noon she slept again,

And seem'd knee-deep in mountain  
 grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,  
 And runlets babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower moan,  
 And murmuring, as at night and  
 morn,

She thought, 'My spirit is here alone,  
 Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream :

She felt he was and was not there.

She woke : the babble of the stream

Fell, and, without, the steady glare  
 Shrank one sick willow sear and small.

The river-bed was dusty-white ;

And all the furnace of the light

Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan

More inward than at night or morn,

'Sweet Mother, let me not here alone

Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

And, rising, from her bosom drew

Old letters, breathing of her worth,

For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be  
 true,

To what is loveliest upon earth.'

An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look at her with slight, and say

'But now thy beauty flows away,

So be alone for evermore.'

'O cruel heart,' she changed her tone,  
 'And cruel love, whose end is scorn,  
 Is this the end to be left alone,  
 To live forgotten, and die forlorn?'

But sometimes in the falling day

An image seem'd to pass the door,  
 To look into her eyes and say,

'But thou shalt be alone no more.'

And flaming downward over all

From heat to heat the day decreased,

And slowly rounded to the east

The one black shadow from the wall.

'The day to night,' she made her  
 moan,

'The day to night, the night to  
 morn,

And day and night I am left alone  
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

At eve a dry cicala sung,

There came a sound as of the sea ;

Backward the lattice-blind she flung,

And lean'd upon the balcony.

There all in spaces rosy-bright

Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,

And deepening thro' the silent spheres

Heaven over Heaven rose the night.

And weeping then she made her moan,

'The night comes on that knows not  
 morn,

When I shall cease to be all alone,

To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

## THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,

'Thou art so full of misery,  
 Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said ;

'Let me not cast in endless shade  
 What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply ;

'To-day I saw the dragon-fly  
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

'An inner impulse rent the veil  
 Of his old husk : from head to tail  
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

'He drier his wings : like gauze they grew ;  
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew  
A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, 'When first the world began,  
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,  
And in the sixth she moulded man.

'She gave him mind, the lordliest  
Proportion, and, above the rest,  
Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied ;  
'Self-blinded are you by your pride :  
Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

'This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
That in a boundless universe  
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

'Think you this mould of hopes and fears  
Could find no statelier than his peers  
In yonder hundred million spheres ?'

It spake, moreover, in my mind :  
'Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,  
Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

Then did my response clearer fall :  
'No compound of this earthly ball  
Is like another, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly ;  
'Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,  
Who'll weep for thy deficiency ?'

'Or will one beam be less intense,  
When thy peculiar difference  
Is cancell'd in the world of sense ?'

I would have said, 'Thou canst not know,'  
But my full heart, that work'd below,  
Ran'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :  
'Thou art so steep'd in misery,  
Surely 'twere better not to be.

'Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,  
Nor any train of reason keep :  
Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, 'The years with change advance :  
If I make dark my countenance,  
I shut my life from happier chance.

'Some turn this sickness yet might take,  
Ev'n yet ' But he : 'What drug can make  
A wither'd palsy cease to shake ?'

I wept, 'Tho' I should die, I know  
That all about the thorn will blow  
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

'And men, thro' novel spheres of thought  
Still moving after truth long sought,  
Will learn new things when I am not.'

'Yet,' said the secret voice, 'some time,  
Sooner or later, will gray prime  
Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

'Not less swift souls that yearn for light,  
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,  
Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,  
The fuzzy prickle fire the dells,  
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent ;  
Each month is various to present  
The world with some development.

'Were this not well, to bide mine hour,  
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower  
How grows the day of human power ?'

'The highest-mounted mind,' he said,  
'Still sees the sacred morning spread  
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain  
Those lonely lights that still remain,  
Just breaking over land and main ?

'Or make that morn, from his cold crown  
And crystal silence creeping down,  
Flood with full daylight glebe and town ?

'Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let  
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set  
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

'Thou hast not gain'd a real height,  
Nor art thou nearer to the light,  
Because the scale is infinite.

'Twere better not to breathe or speak,  
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,  
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover, but to seem to find  
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,  
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,  
"He dared not tarry," men will say,  
Doing dishonour to my clay.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,  
'To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,  
Than once from dread of pain to die.

'Sick art thou—a divided will  
Still heaping on the fear of ill  
The fear of men, a coward still.

'Do men love thee? Art thou so bound  
To men, that how thy name may sound  
Will vex thee lying underground?

'The memory of the wither'd leaf  
In endless time is scarce more brief  
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;  
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,  
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,  
'From emptiness and the waste wide  
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise  
One hope that warm'd me in the days  
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,  
Among the tents I paused and sung,  
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Pæan clear,  
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear  
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,  
To war with falsehood to the knife,  
And not to lose the good of life—

'Some hidden principle to move,  
To put together, part and prove,  
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

'As far as might be, to carve out  
Free space for every human doubt,  
That the whole mind might orb about—

'To search thro' all I felt or saw,  
The springs of life, the depths of awe,  
And reach the law within the law:

'At least, not rotting like a weed,  
But, having sown some generous seed,  
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

'To pass, when Life her light withdraws,  
Not void of righteous self-applause,  
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in mine own,  
To perish, wept for, honour'd, known,  
And like a warrior overthrown;

'Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,  
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears  
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

'Then dying of a mortal stroke,  
What time the foeman's line is broke,  
And all the war is roll'd in smoke.'

'Yea!' said the voice, 'thy dream was good,  
While thou abodest in the bud.  
It was the stirring of the blood.

'If Nature put not forth her power  
About the opening of the flower,  
Who is it that could live an hour?

'Then comes the check, the change, the  
fall,  
Pain rises up, old pleasures fall.  
There is one remedy for all.

'Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,  
Link'd month to month with such a chain  
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

Thou hadst not between death and  
birth  
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.  
So weie thy labour little-worth

'That men with knowledge merely play'd,  
I told thee—hardly nigher made,  
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade ;

'Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,  
Named man, may hope some truth to find,  
That bears relation to the mind.

'For every worm beneath the moon  
Draws different threads, and late and soon  
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

'Cry, faint not : either Truth is born  
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,  
Or in the gateways of the morn.

'Cry, faint not, climb : the summits slope  
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,  
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

'Sometimes a little corner shines,  
As over rainy mist inclines  
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

'I will go forward, sayest thou,  
I shall not fail to find her now.  
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

'If straight thy track, or if oblique,  
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost  
strike,  
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

'And owning but a little more  
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,  
Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and bawl !  
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl ?  
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, one-sided voice,' said I,  
'Wilt thou make everything a lie,  
To flatter me that I may die ?

'I know that age to age succeeds,  
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,  
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have striven,  
Achieving calm, to whom was given  
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

'Who, rowing hard against the stream,  
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And did not dream it was a dream ;

'But heard, by secret transport led,  
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,  
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,  
Bore and forbore, and did not tie,  
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised  
with stones :

'But looking upward, full of grace,  
He pray'd, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face.'

The sullen answer slid betwixt :  
'Not that the grounds of hope were  
fix'd,  
The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,  
But, knowing not the universe,  
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to undo  
One riddle, and to find the true,  
I kmt a hundred others new :

'Or that this anguish fleeting hence,  
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,  
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

'For I go, weak from suffering here :  
Naked I go, and void of cheer :  
What is it that I may not fear ?

'Consider well,' the voice replied,  
'His face, that two hours since hath died ;  
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

'Will he obey when one commands ?  
Or answer should one press his hands ?  
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast :  
There is no other thing express'd  
But long disquiet merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek :  
Tho' one should smite him on the cheek,  
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face  
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,  
Becomes dishonour to her race—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,  
Some grow to honour, some to shame,—  
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,  
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave  
From winter rains that beat his grave.

'High up the vapours fold and swim :  
About him broods the twilight dim :  
'The place he knew forgetteth him.'

'If all be dark, vague voice,' I said,  
'These things are wrapt in doubt and  
dread,  
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

'The sap dries up : the plant declines.  
A deeper tale my heart divines.  
Know I not Death ? the outward signs ?

'I found him when my years were few ;  
A shadow on the graves I knew,  
And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept :  
In her still place the morning wept :  
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'The simple senses crown'd his head .  
"Omega ! thou art Lord," they said,  
"We find no motion in the dead."

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,  
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,  
Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

'Who forged that other influence,  
That heat of inward evidence,  
By which he doubts against the sense ?

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,  
That read his spirit blindly wise,  
Not simple as a thing that dies.

'Here sits he shaping wings to fly :  
His heart forebodes a mystery :  
He names the name Eternity.

'That type of Perfect in his mind  
In Nature can he nowhere find.  
He sows himself on every wind.

'He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,  
And tho' thick veils to apprehend  
A labour working to an end.

'The end and the beginning vex  
His reason : many things perplex,  
With motions, checks, and counterchecks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood  
At such strange war with something  
good,  
He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,  
Vast images in glimmering dawn;  
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn

'Ah ! sure within him and without,  
Could his dark wisdom find it out,  
There must be answer to his doubt,

'But thou canst answer not again  
With thine own weapon art thou slain,  
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.  
In the same circle we revolve.  
Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,  
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced  
A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd  
In his free field, and pastime made,  
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

'A merry boy they call'd him then,  
He sat upon the knees of men  
In days that never come again.

'Before the little ducts began  
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran  
Their course, till thou wert also man :

'Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,  
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,  
Whose troubles number with his days :

'A life of nothings, nothing-worth,  
From that first nothing ere his birth  
To that last nothing under earth !'

'These words,' I said, 'are like the rest ;  
No certain clearness, but at best  
A vague suspicion of the breast :

'But if I grant, thou mightst defend  
The thesis which thy words intend—  
That to begin implies to end ;

'Yet how should I for certain hold,  
Because my memory is so cold,  
That I first was in human mould ?

'I cannot make this matter plain,  
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,  
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found,  
Which only to one engine bound  
Falls off, but cycles always round.

'As old mythologies relate,  
Some draught of Lethe might await  
The slipping thro' from state to state.

'As here we find in trances, men  
Forget the dream that happens then,  
Until they fall in trance again.

'So might we, if our state were such  
As one before, remember much,  
For those two likes might meet and touch.

'But, if I lapsed from nobler place,  
Some legend of a fallen race  
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

'Some vague emotion of delight  
In gazing up an Alpine height,  
Some yearning toward the lamps of  
night ;

'Or if thro' lower lives I came—  
Tho' all experience past became  
Consolidate in mind and frame—

'I might forget my weaker lot ;  
For is not our first year forgot ?  
The haunts of memory echo not.

'And men, whose reason long was blind,  
From cells of madness unconfined,  
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

'Much more, if first I floated free,  
As naked essence, must I be  
Incompetent of memory :

'For memory dealing but with time,  
And he with matter, could she climb  
Beyond her own material prime ?

'Moreover, something is or seems,  
That touches me with mystic gleams,  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

'Of something felt, like something here ;  
Of something done, I know not where ;  
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. 'I talk,' said he,  
'Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee  
Thy pain is a reality.'

'But thou,' said I, 'hast missed thy  
mark,  
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,  
By making all the horizon dark.

'Why not set forth, if I should do  
This rashness, that which might ensue  
With this old soul in organs new ?

'Whatever crazy sorrow saith,  
No life that breathes with human breath  
Has ever truly long'd for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,  
Oh life, not death, for which we pant ;  
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.  
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,  
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose, and I released  
The casement, and the light increased  
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,  
When meres begin to uncongeal,  
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :  
Passing the place where each must rest,  
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,  
With measured footfall firm and mild,  
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood  
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,  
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,  
The little maiden walk'd demure,  
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,  
My frozen heart began to beat,  
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :  
I spoke, but answer came there none .  
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,  
A little whisper silver-clear,  
A murmur, 'Be of better cheer.'

As from some blissful neighbourhood,  
A notice faintly understood,  
'I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,  
A hint, a whisper breathing low,  
'I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Æolian harp that wakes  
No certain air, but overtakes  
Far thought with music that it makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :  
'What is it thou knowest, sweet voice ?'  
I cried.

'A hidden hope,' the voice replied :

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour  
From out my sullen heart a power  
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,  
That every cloud, that spreads above  
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,  
And Nature's living motion lent  
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,  
The slow result of winter showers :  
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :  
The woods were fill'd so full with song,  
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong ;

And all so variously wrought,  
I marvel'd how the mind was brought  
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice  
To commune with that barren voice,  
Than him that said, 'Rejoice ! Rejoice !'

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,  
His double chin, his portly size,  
And who that knew him could forget  
The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?  
The slow wise smile that, round about  
His dusty forehead duly curl'd,  
Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
And full of dealings with the world ?

In yonder chair I see him sit,  
Three fingers round the old silver cup—  
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
At his own jest—gray eyes lit up  
With summer lightnings of a soul  
So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,  
His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :  
My own sweet Alice, we must die.  
There's somewhat in this world amiss  
Shall be unriddled by and by.

There's somewhat flows to us in life,  
 But more is taken quite away.  
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth?  
 I least should breathe a thought of  
 pain.

Would God renew me from my birth  
 I'd almost live my life again.  
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
 And once again to woo thee mine—  
 It seems in after-dinner talk  
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy  
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
 Where this old mansion mounted high  
 Looks down upon the village spire:  
 For even here, where I and you  
 Have lived and loved alone so long,  
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
 By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove  
 In firry woodlands making moan;  
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
 I had no motion of my own.  
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
 Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—  
 Still hither thither idly sway'd  
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear  
 The milldam rushing down with noise,  
 And see the minnows everywhere  
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,  
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung  
 Below the range of stepping-stones,  
 Or those three chestnuts near, that hung  
 In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,  
 When after roving in the woods  
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat  
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds  
 Were glistening to the breezy blue;  
 And on the slope, an absent fool,  
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,  
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,  
 An echo from a measured strain,  
 Beat time to nothing in my head  
 From some odd corner of the brain.  
 It haunted me, the morning long,  
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
 The phantom of a silent song,  
 That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
 I watch'd the little circles die;  
 They past into the level flood,  
 And there a vision caught my eye;  
 The reflex of a beauteous form,  
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
 That morning, on the casement-edge  
 A long green box of mignonette,  
 And you were leaning from the ledge:  
 And when I raised my eyes, above  
 They met with two so full and bright—  
 Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,  
 That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
 That I should die an early death:  
 For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
 And fill'd the breast with pure breath.  
 My mother thought, What ails the boy?  
 For I was alter'd, and began  
 To move about the house with joy,  
 And with the certain step of man.

I loved the humming wave that swam  
 Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
 The sleepy pool above the dam,  
 The pool beneath it never still,  
 The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
 The dark round of the dripping  
 wheel,  
 The very air about the door  
 Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
 When April nights began to blow,  
 And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
 I saw the village lights below;

I knew your taper far away,  
 And full at heart of trembling hope,  
 From of the wold I came, and lay  
 Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;  
 And 'by that lamp,' I thought, 'she sits !'  
 The white chalk-quarry from the hill  
 Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.

'O that I were beside her now !  
 O will she answer if I call ?  
 O would she give me vow for vow,  
 Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?'

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;  
 And, in the pauses of the wind,  
 Sometimes I heard you sing within ;  
 Sometimes your shadow cross'd the blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,  
 And the long shadow of the chain  
 Flitted across into the night,  
 And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,  
 The lanes, you know, were white with  
 may,  
 Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek  
 Flush'd like the coming of the day ;  
 And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,  
 You would, and would not, little one !  
 Although I pleaded tenderly,  
 And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought  
 To yield consent to my desire :  
 She wish'd me happy, but she thought  
 I might have look'd a little higher ;  
 And I was young—too young to wed ;  
 'Yet must I love her for your sake ;  
 Go fetch your Alice here,' she said :  
 Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride :  
 But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;  
 This dress and that by turns you tried,  
 Too fearful that you should not please.  
 I loved you better for your fears,  
 I knew you could not look but well ;  
 And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,  
 I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,  
 The doubt my mother would not see ;  
 She spoke at large of many things,  
 And at the last she spoke of me ;  
 And turning look'd upon your face,  
 As near this door you sat apart,  
 And rose, and, with a silent grace  
 Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song  
 I gave you, Alice, on the day  
 When, arm in arm, we went along,  
 A pensive pair, and you were gay  
 With bridal flowers—that I may seem,  
 As in the nights of old, to lie  
 Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,  
 While those full chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,  
 And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
 That I would be the jewel  
 That trembles in her ear—  
 For hid in ringlets day and night,  
 I'd touch her neck so warm and white

And I would be the girdle  
 About her dainty dainty waist,  
 And her heart would beat against me,  
 In sorrow and in rest  
 And I should know if it beat right,  
 I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,  
 And all day long to fall and rise  
 Upon her balmy bosom,  
 With her laughter or her sighs,  
 And I would lie so light, so light,  
 I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet ! which true love spells—  
 True love interprets—right alone.  
 His light upon the letter dwells,  
 For all the spirit is his own.  
 So, if I waste words now, in truth  
 You must blame Love. His early rage  
 Had force to make me rhyme in youth,  
 And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
 Like mine own life to me thou art,  
 Where Past and Present, wound in one,  
 Do make a garland for the heart :

So sing that other song I made,  
 Half-angel'd with my happy lot,  
 The day, when in the chestnut shade  
 I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net,  
 Can he pass, and we forget?  
 Many suns arise and set.  
 Many a chance the years beget  
 Love the gift is Love the debt

Even so

Love is hurt with jar and fret.  
 Love is made a vague regret  
 Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
 Idle habit links us yet.  
 What is love? for we forget :

Ah, no! no!

Look thio' mine eyes with thine. True  
 wife,

Round my true heart thine arms entwined  
 My other dearer life in life,

Look thro' my very soul with thine!  
 Untouch'd with any shade of years,

May those kind eyes for ever dwell!  
 They have not shed a many tears,  
 Dear eyes, since first I knew them  
 well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part  
 Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,

The still affection of the heart  
 Became an outward breathing type,

That into stillness past again,  
 And left a want unknown before;

Although the loss had brought us pain,  
 That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on The kiss,  
 The woven arms, seem but to be

Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
 The comfort, I have found in thee:  
 But that God bless thee, dear—who  
 wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—  
 With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
 With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
 To yon old mill across the wolds;  
 For look, the sunset, south and north,  
 Winds all the vale in rosy folds,

And fies your narrow casement glass,  
 Touching the sullen pool below:  
 On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
 Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

## FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering might!  
 O sun, that from thy noonday height  
 Shudderest when I strain my sight,  
 Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
 Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
 Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and blind,  
 I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
 Below the city's eastern towers:  
 I thirsted for the brooks, the showers:  
 I roll'd among the tender flowers:  
 I crush'd them on my breast, my mouth;  
 I look'd athwart the burning douth  
 Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his  
 name,  
 From my swift blood that went and came  
 A thousand little shafts of flame  
 Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.  
 O Love, O fire! once he drew  
 With one long kiss my whole soul thro'  
 My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
 He cometh quickly: from below  
 Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow  
 Before him, striking on my brow.

In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
 Down-deepening from swoon to swoon,  
 Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,  
 And from beyond the noon a fire  
 Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher  
 The skies stoop down in their desire;  
 And, isled in sudden seas of light,  
 My heart, pierced thro' with fierce  
 delight,  
 Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,  
 All naked in a sultry sky,

Droops blinded with his shining eye :  
I *will* possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

### CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the  
glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine  
to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway  
down  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them  
roals

The long brook falling thro' the clov'n  
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning : but in  
front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful Cenone, wandering forlorn  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round  
her neck

Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with  
vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-  
shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the  
upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are  
dead.

The purple flower droops : the golden bee

Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are  
dim,  
And I am all aware of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O  
Caves

That house the cold crown'd snake ! O  
mountain brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God,  
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
A cloud that gather'd shape : for it may be  
That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

I waited underneath the dawning hills,  
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :  
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,  
white-hooved,

Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft :  
Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-  
dropt eyes

I sat alone : white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard  
skin

Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny  
hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :  
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow  
brightens

When the wind blows the foam, and all  
my heart

Went forth to embrace him coming ere  
he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-  
white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of  
speech

Came down upon my heart.

"My own Cenone,  
Beautiful-brow'd Cenone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind  
ingrav'n

'For the most fair,' would seem to award  
it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married  
brows."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,  
And added "This was cast upon the  
board,

When all the full-faced presence of the  
Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom  
'twere due:

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering, that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the  
cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of  
Gods."

'Dear mother Ida, haiken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight: one silvery  
cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower  
they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded  
bower,

And at their feet the crocus brake like  
fire,

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and  
vine,

This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
With bunch and berry and flower thro'  
and thro'.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and  
lean'd

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.  
Then first I heard the voice of her, to  
whom

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that  
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
Wherewith to embellish state, "from  
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed  
with corn,

Or labour'd mine undrainable of ore.  
Honour," she said, "and homage, tax  
and toll,

From many an inland town and haven  
large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing  
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Still she spake on and still she spake of  
power,

"Which in all action is the end of all;  
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred  
And throned of wisdom—from all neigh-  
bour crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon  
from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee  
king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
Should come most welcome, seeing men,  
in power

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd  
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
In knowledge of their own supremacy."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit  
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought  
 of power  
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she  
 stood  
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared  
 limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed  
 spear  
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
 The while, above, her full and earnest  
 eye  
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry  
 cheek  
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made  
 reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-  
 control,  
 These three alone lead life to sovereign  
 power.  
 Yet not for power (power of herself  
 Would come uncalled for) but to live by  
 law,  
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;  
 And, because right is right, to follow right  
 Werewisdom in the scorn of consequence."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Again she said : "I woo thee not with  
 gifts.  
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
 If gazing on divinity disrobed  
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,  
 Unbias'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure  
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to  
 thee,

So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,  
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a  
 God's,

To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,  
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow  
 Snew'd with action, and the full-grown  
 will,

Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
 Commensure perfect freedom."

'Here she ceas'd,  
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, "O  
 Paris,  
 Give it to Pallas !" but he heard me not,  
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian  
 wells,  
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
 From her warm brows and bosom her  
 deep hair  
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
 And shoulder : from the violets her light  
 foot  
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded  
 form  
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
 moved.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,  
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, "I promise  
 thee  
 The fairest and most loving wife in  
 Greece,"  
 She spoke and laugh'd : I shut my sight  
 for fear :  
 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his  
 arm,  
 And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,  
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
 And I was left alone within the bower ;  
 And from that time to this I am alone,  
 And I shall be alone until I die.

'Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Fairest—why fairest wife ? am I not fair ?  
 My love hath told me so a thousand  
 times.

Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,  
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful  
 tail

Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
 loving is she ?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my  
arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips  
prest  
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling  
dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My tall dark pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge  
High over the blue gorge, and all between  
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
Foster’d the callow eaglet—from beneath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn  
The panther’s roar came muffled, while  
I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist  
Sweep thro’ them; never see them over-  
laid  
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin’d folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from the  
glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with  
her  
The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change; that I might speak  
my mind,  
And tell her to her face how much I hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?

Seal’d it with kisses? water’d it with  
tears?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my  
face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my  
weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating  
cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.  
Thou weightiest heavy on the heart within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more and  
more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the in-  
most hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes!

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to  
me  
Walking the cold and starless road of  
Death  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and  
go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come  
forth  
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
What this may be I know not, but I  
know  
That, wheresoe’er I am by night and  
day,  
All earth and air seem only burning  
fire.’

## THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race :  
She was the fairest in the face :

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
They were together, and she fell ;  
Therefore revenge became me well.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

She died : she went to burning flame :  
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.  
The wind is howling in turret and tree.  
Whole weeks and months, and early and  
late,  
To win his love I lay in wait :  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I made a feast ; I bade him come ;  
I won his love, I brought him home.  
The wind is roaring in turret and tree.  
And after supper, on a bed,  
Upon my lap he laid his head :  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :  
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.  
The wind is raging in turret and tree.  
I hated him with the hate of hell,  
But I loved his beauty passing well.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :  
I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
The wind is raving in turret and tree.  
As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
And laid him at his mother's feet.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
(For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,  
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,  
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen  
In all varieties of mould and mind)  
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if  
Good,  
Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are  
three sisters  
That doat upon each other, friends to  
man,  
Living together under the same roof,  
And never can be under'd without tears.  
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall  
be  
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold  
lie  
Howling in outer darkness. Not for this  
Was common clay ta'en from the common  
earth  
Moulded by God, and temper'd with the  
tears  
Of angels to the perfect shape of man

## THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,  
Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd  
brass  
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or  
shelf  
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
My soul would live alone unto herself  
In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and  
round,' I said,  
'Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast  
shade  
Sleeps on his luminous ring'

To which my soul made answer readily :  
 ' Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,  
 So loyal-rich and wide.'

\* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \*

Four courts I made, East, West and  
 South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth  
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row  
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the  
 sky  
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one  
 swell  
 Across the mountain stream'd below  
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell  
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
 A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd  
 From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, ' And who shall  
 gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise ?'

For that sweet incense rose and never  
 fail'd,  
 And, while days sank or mounted higher,  
 The light aerial gallery, golden-laid,  
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
 and traced,  
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires  
 From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,  
 And tipt with frost-like spues.

\* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \*

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
 Tho' which the livelong day my soul  
 did pass,  
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace  
 stood,  
 All various, each a perfect whole  
 From living Nature, fit for every mood  
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green  
 and blue,  
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter  
 blew  
 His wretched bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of  
 sand,  
 And some one pacing there alone,  
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,  
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
 waves.  
 You seem'd to hear them climb and fall  
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing  
 caves,  
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
 By heids upon an endless plain,  
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding  
 low,  
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
 In front they bound the sheaves. Behind  
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
 And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones  
 and slags,  
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher  
 All barr'd with long white cloud the  
 scornful crags,  
 And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,  
As fit for every mood of mind,  
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there  
Not less than truth design'd.

\* \* \* \*

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx  
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hand  
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;  
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise  
A group of Houris bow'd to see  
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes  
That said, We wait for thee

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
In some fair space of sloping greens  
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian  
king to hear  
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
And many a tract of palm and rice,  
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd  
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'd,  
From off her shoulder backward borne:  
From one hand droop'd a crocus: one  
hand grasp'd  
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh  
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,  
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair  
Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,  
Not less than life, design'd.

\* \* \* \*

Then in the towers I placed great bells  
that swung,  
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;  
And with choice paintings of wise men I  
hung  
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,  
Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
mild;  
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd  
his song,  
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;  
A million wrinkles carved his skin;  
A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,  
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
Many an arch high up did lift,  
And angels rising and descending met  
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
With cycles of the human tale  
Of this wide world, the times of every land  
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and  
stings;  
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or  
bind  
All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick man  
declined,  
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod . and those great  
bells

Began to chime. She took her throne.  
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' coloured  
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;  
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,  
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion  
were

Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd  
fair  
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, ambei,  
emerald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,  
drew  
Rivers of melodies. -

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
song  
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful  
mirth,

Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible  
earth,  
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : ' All these are  
mine,

And let the world have peace or wars,  
'Tis one to me.' She—when young night  
divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—  
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,  
And pure quintessences of precious oils  
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands  
and cried,

' I marvel if my still delight  
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,  
Be flatter'd to the height.

' O all things fair to sate my various eyes !  
O shapes and hues that please me well !  
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

' O God-like isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,  
What time I watch the darkening droves  
of swine  
That range on yonder plain.

' In filthy sloughs they roll a purient skin,  
They graze and wallow, breed and  
sleep ;  
And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral instinct would she prate  
And of the rising from the dead,  
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate ;  
And at the last she said -

' I take possession of man's mind and deed.  
I care not what the sects may brawl.  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all.'

\* \* \* \* \*

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn  
mirth,  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so  
three years

She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
ears,  
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever he bare  
The abysmal deeps of Personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
turn'd her sight

The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote, 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite  
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude  
Fell on her, from which mood was  
born

Scorn of herself; again, from out that  
mood

Laughter at her self-scorn.

'What' is not this my place of strength,'  
she said,

'My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
were laid

Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood

Uncertain shapes; and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears  
of blood,  
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of  
flame,

And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon she  
came,

That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light  
Or power of movement, seem'd my  
soul,

'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of  
sand,

Left on the shore; that hears all night  
The plunging seas draw backward from  
the land

Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw  
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.

'No voice,' she shriek'd in that lone  
hall,

'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world:

One deep, deep silence all!'

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,

Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in cume:

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round  
With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound  
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking  
slow,

In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moon-rise hears the low  
Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound  
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep  
cry

Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, 'I  
have found  
A new land, but I die.

She howl'd aloud, 'I am on fire within.  
There comes no murmur of reply.

What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die?'

So when four years were wholly finished,  
She threw her royal robes away.

'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she said,  
'Where I may mourn and pray.

'Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are  
So lightly, beautifully built :  
Perchance I may return with others there  
When I have purged my guilt.'

## LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
Of me you shall not win renown :  
You thought to break a country heart  
For pastime, ere you went to town.  
At me you smiled, but unbeguled  
I saw the snare, and I retired :  
The daughter of a hundred Eails,  
You are not one to be desued.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
I know you proud to bear your name,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
Too proud to care from whence I came.  
Nor would I break for you sweet sake  
A heart that doats on true charms.  
A simple maiden in her flower  
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
Some meeker pupil you must find,  
For were you queen of all that is,  
I could not stoop to such a mind  
You sought to prove how I could love,  
And my disdain is my reply.  
The lion on your old stone gates  
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You put strange memories in my head.  
Not thrice your blanching limes have  
blown  
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.  
Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies :  
A great enchantress you may be ;  
But there was that across his throat  
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
When thus he met his mother's view,  
She had the passions of her kind,  
She spake some certain truths of you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word  
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
There stands a spectre in your hall :  
The guilt of blood is at your door :  
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.  
You held your course without remorse,  
To make him trust his modest worth,  
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
From yon blue heavens above us bent  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.  
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
'Tis only noble to be good.  
Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You pine among your halls and towers :  
The languid light of your proud eyes  
Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,  
But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
You needs must play such pranks as  
these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
If time be heavy on your hands,  
Are there no beggars at your gate,  
Nor any poor about your lands ?  
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,  
Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
And let the foolish yeoman go.

## THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;  
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;  
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day ;  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;  
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :  
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,  
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,  
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :  
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,  
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?  
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,  
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,  
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.  
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be :  
They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me ?  
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,  
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen ;  
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,  
And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;  
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,  
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass ;  
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,  
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,  
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

'So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year :  
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

## NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.  
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,  
Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set : he set and left behind  
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind ;  
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see  
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers : we had a merry day ;  
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May ;  
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,  
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills : the frost is on the pane :  
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again .  
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high :  
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,  
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,  
And the swallow 'll come back again with summer o'er the wave,  
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,  
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,  
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,  
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light  
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;  
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool  
On the oat-grass and the sward-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,  
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.  
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,  
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;  
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ,

Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,  
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place ;  
Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face ;  
Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,  
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for evermore,  
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door ;  
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green :  
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :  
Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :  
But tell her, when I'm gone, to trim the rosebush that I set  
About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother : call me before the day is born.  
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;  
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,  
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

### CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;  
And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.  
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !  
To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,  
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,  
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,  
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,  
And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !  
But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;  
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !  
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !  
O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !  
A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.  
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :  
No! would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,  
For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,  
There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :  
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,  
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;  
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;  
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;  
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;  
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,  
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,  
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said ;  
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,  
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, ' It's not for them : it's mine.'  
And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.  
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,  
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know  
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go  
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.  
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;  
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.  
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;  
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;  
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know  
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—  
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done  
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—  
For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—  
And what is life, that we should moan ? why make we such ado ?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—  
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—  
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—  
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

## THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed toward  
the land,

'This mounting wave will roll us shore-  
ward soon.'

In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall  
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-  
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did  
go;

And some thro' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward  
flow

From the inner land: far off, three  
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with  
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the  
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts  
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding  
vale

And meadow, set with slender galingale;  
A land where all things always seem'd  
the same!

And round about the keel with faces  
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters  
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they  
gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,  
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and rave  
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,

His voice was thin, as voices from the  
grave;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
And music in his ears his beating heart  
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow  
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the  
shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,  
Of child, and wife, and slave; but ever-  
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the  
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren  
foam.

Then some one said, 'We will return no  
more;'

And all at once they sang, 'Our island  
home

Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer  
roam.'

## CHORIC SONG.

## I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between  
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentler on the spout lies,  
Than tiri'd eyelids upon tiri'd eyes;

Music that brings sweet sleep down from  
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers  
weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
hangs in sleep.

## II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from  
weariness?

All things have rest : why should we toil  
alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy  
balm ;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
'There is no joy but calm !'  
Why should we only toil, the roof and  
crown of things?

## III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.  
All its allotted length of days,  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no  
toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life ; ah, why  
Should life all labour be ?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we  
have  
To war with evil ? Is there any peace

In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward  
the grave

In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :  
Give us long rest or death, dark death,  
or dreamful ease.

## V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-  
ward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream !  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber  
light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on  
the height ;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;  
Eating the Lotos day by day,  
To watch the crisping nipples on the  
beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melan-  
choly ;  
To muse and brood and live again in  
memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an  
urn of brass !

## VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears : but all hath  
suffer'd change :  
For surely now our household hearths are  
cold :  
Our sons inherit us : our looks are  
strange :  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble  
joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel  
sings  
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten  
things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle ?  
Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile :  
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
 There is confusion worse than death,  
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
 Long labour unto aged breath,  
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars  
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the  
 pilot-stars.

## VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,  
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us,  
     blowing lowly)  
 With half-dropt eyelid still,  
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
 To watch the long bright river drawing  
     slowly  
 His waters from the purple hill—  
 To hear the dewy echoes calling  
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined  
     vine—  
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water  
     falling  
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath  
     divine !  
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling  
     brine,  
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
     beneath the pine.

## VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :  
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :  
 All day the wind breathes low with  
     mellower tone :  
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy downs the  
     yellow Lotos-dust is blown.  
 We have had enough of action, and of  
     motion we,  
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
 when the surge was seething free,  
 Where the wallowing monster spouted  
     his foam-fountains in the sea.  
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
     an equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie  
     reclined  
 On the hills like Gods together, careless  
     of mankind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the  
     bolts are hurl'd  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the  
     clouds are lightly curl'd  
 Round their golden houses, girdled with  
     the gleaming world :  
 Where they smile in secret, looking over  
     wasted lands,  
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,  
     roaring deeps and fiery sands,  
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and  
     sinking ships, and praying hands.  
 But they smile, they find a music centred  
     in a doleful song  
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient  
     tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the  
     words are strong ;  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men  
     that cleave the soil,  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with  
     enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and  
     wine and oil ;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some,  
     'tis whisper'd—down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian  
     valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of  
     asphodel.  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet  
     than toil, the shore  
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind  
     and wave and oar ;  
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will  
     not wander more.

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,  
 'The Legend of Good Women,' long ago  
 Sung by the morning star of song, who  
     made

His music heard below ;

    Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose  
     sweet breath  
     Preluded those melodious bursts that fill  
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
     With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his  
art

Held me above the subject, as strong  
gales

Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'  
my heart,

Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In  
every land

I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand  
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient  
song

Peopled the hollow dark, like burning  
stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and  
wrong,

And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging  
hoofs ;

And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-  
aries ;

And forms that pass'd at windows and on  
roofs

Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall  
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet

Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;  
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with  
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues  
of fire ;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and  
masts,

And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen  
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers  
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron  
grates,

And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when  
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-same  
way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level  
sand,

Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
Resolved on noble things, and strove  
to speak,

As when a great thought strikes along  
the brain,  
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;  
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing  
thought

Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and  
did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,  
and brought

Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far  
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in coolest  
dew

The maiden splendours of the morningstar  
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and  
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood underneath  
Their broad curved branches, fledged with  
clearest green,  
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey  
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the twi-  
light plain,

Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,  
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,  
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;  
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine  
turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree to  
tree,

And at the root thro' lush green grasses  
burn'd

The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I  
knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn  
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks  
drèch'd in dew,

Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
Pour'd back into my empty soul and  
frame

The times when I remember to have been  
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone  
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-  
ful clime,

'Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine  
own,

Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,  
Stillter than chisell'd marble, standing  
there;

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with sur-  
prise

Froze my swift speech: she turning on  
my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty: ask thou not my  
name:

No one can be more wise than destiny.  
Many drew swords and died. Where'er  
I came

I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field  
Myself for such a face had boldly died,'  
I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,  
To her full height her stately stature  
draws;

'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with  
a curse:

This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,  
Which men call'd Aulis in those iron  
years:

My father held his hand upon his face;  
I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak: my voice was  
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
The stern black-bearded kings with wolf-  
ish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;  
The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and  
the shore;

The bright death quiver'd at the victim's  
throat;

Touch'd; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward brow:

'I would the white cold heavy-plung-  
ing foam,

Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep  
below,

Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence  
drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea:  
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come  
here,

That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold  
black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began:

'I govern'd men by change, and so I  
sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen  
a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

'The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
According to my humour ebb and flow.  
I have no men to govern in this wood :  
That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not  
bend  
One will ; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye  
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,  
friend,  
Where is Mark Antony ?

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode  
sublime  
On Fortune's neck : we sat as God by  
God :  
The Nilus would have risen before his time  
And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,  
and lit  
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O  
my life  
In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's  
alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,  
Contented there to die !

'And there he died : and when I heard  
my name  
Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook  
my fear  
Of the other : with a worm I balk'd his  
fame.  
What else was left ? look here !'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
The polish'd argent of her breast to  
sight  
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a  
laugh,  
Showing the aspick's bite.)

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier  
found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and  
crown'd,  
Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range  
Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance  
From tone to tone, and glided thro' all  
change  
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight ;  
Because with sudden motion from the  
ground  
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with  
light  
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest  
darts ;  
As once they drew into two burning rings  
All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
A noise of some one coming thro' the  
lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested bird  
That claps his wings at dawn.

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late and  
soon,  
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the  
dell,  
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
beams divine :  
All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
the dell  
With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine  
laves  
The lawn by some cathedra, thro' the  
door  
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and  
tied

To where he stands,—so stood I, when  
that flow  
Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
A maiden pure ; as when she went  
along  
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome  
light,  
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : ' Heaven heads  
the count of crimes  
With that wild oath.' She render'd  
answer high :

' Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times  
I would be born and die.

' Single I grew, like some green plant,  
whose root  
Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-  
neath,  
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower  
to fruit  
Changed, I was ripe for death.

' My God, my land, my father—these did  
move  
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature  
gave,  
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of  
love  
Down to a silent grave.

' And I went mourning, " No fair Hebrew  
boy  
Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among  
The Hebrew mothers "—emptied of all  
joy,  
Leaving the dance and song,

' Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal  
bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
glow  
Beneath the battled tower.

' The light white cloud swam over us.  
Anon

We heard the lion roaring from his den ;  
We saw the large white stars rise one by  
one,  
Or, from the darken'd glen,

' Saw God divide the night with flying  
flame,  
And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief  
became  
A solemn scorn of ills.

' When the next moon was roll'd into  
the sky,  
Strength came to me that equal'd my  
desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire !

' It comforts me in this one thought to  
dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father's will ;  
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
Sweetens the spirit still.

' Moreover it is written that my race  
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
Aroer  
On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face  
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where I  
stood :

' Glory to God,' she sang, and past  
afar,

Thidding the sombre boskage of the wood,  
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
As one that from a casement leans his  
head,  
When midnight bells cease ringing sud-  
denly,  
And the old year is dead.

' Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of care,  
Murmur'd beside me : ' Turn and look  
on me :  
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,  
If what I was I be.

'Would I had been some maiden coarse  
and poor !

O me, that I should ever see the light !  
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and  
trust :

To whom the Egyptian : 'O, you  
tamely died !  
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,  
and thrust  
The dagger thro' her side.'

With that sharp sound the white dawn's  
creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery  
Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
dreams  
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
dark,  
Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last  
trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
Arc,  
A light of ancient France ;

O! her who knew that Love can vanquish  
Death,  
Who kneeling, with one arm about  
her king,

Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
breath,  
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep  
Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
hidden ore

That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
sleep  
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what  
dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
strike  
Into that wondrous track of dreams  
again !  
But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath been  
blest,

Desiring what is mingled with past  
years,  
In yearnings that can never be exprest  
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest  
art,

Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,  
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart  
Faints, faded by its heat.

## THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :  
While all the neighbours shoot thee  
round,

I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,  
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine ; the range of lawn and  
park :

The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,  
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that gold dagger of thy bill  
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,  
Cold February loved, is dry :  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once, when  
young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
coarse,

I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a hawk hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing  
While yon sun prospers in the blue,  
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are  
new,  
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

# THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily sigh-  
ing :

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low,  
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :  
He will not see the dawn of day.  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,  
And the New-year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;  
So long as you have been with us,  
Such joy as you have seen with us,  
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;  
A jollier year we shall not see  
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,  
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;  
We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've half a mind to die with you,  
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his merry quips are o'er.  
To see him die, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,  
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.  
The night is starry and cold, my  
friend,  
And the New-year blithe and bold,  
my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro :  
The cricket chirps : the light burns low :  
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.  
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :  
What is it we can do for you ?  
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing shap and thin.  
Alack ! our friend is gone.  
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :  
Step from the corpse, and let him in  
That standeth there alone,  
And waiteth at the door.  
There's a new foot on the floor, my  
friend,  
And a new face at the door, my  
friend,  
A new face at the door.

## TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain, blows  
More softly round the open wold,  
And gently comes the world to those  
That are cast in gentle mould

And me this knowledge bolder made,  
Or else I had not dared to flow  
In these words toward you, and invade  
Even with a verse you holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs are  
nursed,  
Fall into shadow, soonest lost :  
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love  
He lends us ; but, when love is grown  
To ripeness, that on which it thrives  
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !  
In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;  
Once tho' mine own doors Death did  
pass ;  
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me  
Once more. Two years his chair is  
seen  
Empty before us. That was he  
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star  
 Rose with you thro' a little arc  
 Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
 Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust  
 I honour and his living worth :  
 A man more pure and bold and just  
 Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
 Since that dearsoul hath fall'n asleep.  
 Great Nature is more wise than I .  
 I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,  
 Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,  
 I will not even preach to you,  
 ' Weep, weeping dulls the inward  
 pain.'

Let Grief be her own mistress still.  
 She loveth her own anguish deep  
 More than much pleasure. Let her will  
 Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, ' God's ordinance  
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;'  
 For that is not a common chance  
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone  
 In all our hearts, as mournful light  
 That broods above the fallen sun,  
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near  
 Cast down her eyes, and in her  
 throat

Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear  
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,  
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,  
 Who miss the brother of your youth ?  
 Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :  
 Both are my friends, and my true  
 breast  
 Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be  
 That only silence suteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would  
 make  
 Grief more. 'Twere better I should  
 cease  
 Although myself could almost take  
 The place of him that sleeps in  
 peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :  
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,  
 While the stars burn, the moons increase,  
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.  
 Nothing comes to thee new or strange.  
 Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;  
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

## ON A MOURNER.

## I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,  
 Imitates God, and turns her face  
 To every land beneath the skies,  
 Counts nothing that she meets with  
 base,  
 But lives and loves in every place ;

## II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,  
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,  
 Steps from her airy hill, and greens  
 The swamp, where hums the dropping  
 snipe,  
 With moss and braided marsh-pipe ;

## III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,  
 Saying, ' Beat quicker, for the time  
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways  
 Are pleasant, and the beech and lime  
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

## IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,  
 Going before to some far shrine,  
 Teach that sick heart the stronger choice,  
 Till all thy life one way incline  
 With one wide Will that closes thine.

## V.

And when the zoning eve has died  
 Where yon dark valleys' wind forlorn,  
 Come Hope and Memory, spouse and  
 bride,  
 From out the borders of the morn,  
 With that fair child betwixt them born.

## VI.

And when no mortal motion jars  
 The blackness round the tombing sod,  
 Thro' silence and the trembling stars  
 Comes Faith from tracts no feet have  
 trod,  
 And Virtue, like a household god

## VII.

Promising empire; such as those  
 Once heard at dead of night to greet  
 Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose  
 With sacrifice, while all the fleet  
 Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
 Within this region I subsist,  
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
 And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,  
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
 The land, where girt with friends or  
 foes

A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,  
 A land of just and old renown,  
 Where Freedom slowly broadens  
 down

From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
 But by degrees to fullness wrought,  
 The strength of some diffusive thought  
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
 Opinion, and induce a time  
 When single thought is civil crime,  
 And individual freedom mute;

Tho' Power should make from land to  
 land

The name of Britain trebly great—  
 Tho' every channel of the State  
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,  
 Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
 And I will see before I die  
 The palms and temples of the South.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,  
 The thunders breaking at her feet:  
 Above her shook the starry lights:  
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
 But fragments of her mighty voice  
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt she down thro' town and field  
 To mingle with the human race,  
 And part by part to men reveal'd  
 The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
 From her isle-altar gazing down,  
 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
 And, King-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.  
 The wisdom of a thousand years  
 Is in them. May perpetual youth  
 Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,  
 Make bright our days and light our  
 dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine  
 The falsehood of extremes!

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-brought  
 From out the storied Past, and used  
 Within the Present, but transfused  
 Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends,  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings  
That every sophister can lme.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for  
day,  
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years ·  
Cut Prejudice against the grain ·  
But gentle words are always gain :  
Regard the weakness of thy peers ·

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise :  
It grows to guerdon after-days :  
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch ·

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
Not master'd by some modern term ;  
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :  
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life, that, working strongly,  
binds—  
Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should controul  
Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school ;  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head ;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like  
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
 Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
 Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
 That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke  
 From either side, nor veil his eyes :  
 And if some dreadful need should rise  
 Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
 As we bear blossom of the dead ;  
 Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

### ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man  
 To rule by land and sea,  
 Strong mother of a Lion-line,  
 Be proud of those strong sons of thine  
 Who wrench'd their rights from thee !

What wonder, if in noble heat  
 Those men thine arms withstood,  
 Retought the lesson thou hadst taught,  
 And in thy spirit with thee fought—  
 Who spang from English blood !

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,  
 Lift up thy rocky face,  
 And shatter, when the storms are black,  
 In many a steaming torrent back,  
 The seas that shock thy base !

Whatever harmonies of law  
 The growing world assume,  
 Thy work is thine—The single note  
 From that deep chord which Hampden  
 smote  
 Will vibrate to the doom.

### THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,  
 Her rags scarce held together ;  
 There strode a stranger to the door,  
 And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,  
 He utter'd rhyme and reason,  
 'Here, take the goose, and keep you  
 warm,  
 It is a stormy season.'

She caught the white goose by the leg.  
 A goose—'twas no great matter.  
 The goose let fall a golden egg  
 With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the  
 pelf,  
 And ran to tell her neighbours ;  
 And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,  
 And rested from her labours.

And feeding high, and living soft,  
 Grew plump and able-bodied ;  
 Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,  
 The parson smil'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,  
 She felt her heart grow prouder :  
 But ah ! the more the white goose laud  
 It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;  
 It stir'd the old wife's mettle :  
 She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
 And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

'A quinsy choke thy cursed note !'  
 Then wax'd her anger stronger.  
 'Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,  
 I will not bear it longer.'

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat ;  
 Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.  
 The goose flew this way and flew that,  
 And fill'd the house with clamour.

As head and heels upon the floor  
 They flounder'd all together,  
 There strode a stranger to the door,  
 And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,  
 He utter'd words of scorning ;  
 'So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
 It is a stormy morning.'

The wild wind rang from park and plain,  
And round the attics rumbled,  
Till all the tables danced again,  
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,  
The blast was hard and haider.

Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,  
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose  
Her household fled the danger,  
Quoth she, 'The Devil take the goose,  
And God forget the stranger !'

## ENGLISH IDYLLS

### AND OTHER POEMS.

#### THE EPIC.

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-  
eve,—

The game of forfeits done—the girls all  
kiss'd

Beneath the sacred bush and past away—  
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard  
Hall,

The host, and I sat round the wassail-  
bowl,

Then half-way ebb'd : and there we held  
a talk,

How all the old honour had from Christmas  
gone,

Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd  
games

In some odd nooks like this ; till I, tired  
out

With cutting eights that day upon the  
pond,

Where, three times slipping from the  
outer edge,

I bump'd the ice into three several stars,  
Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard

The parson taking wide and wider  
sweeps,

Now harping on the church-commis-  
sioners,

Now hawking at Geology and schism ;  
Until I woke, and found him settled down

Upon the general decay of faith  
Right thro' the world, 'at home was little  
left,

And none abroad : there was no anchor,  
none,

To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt  
his hand

On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by  
him.'

'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-  
bowl.'

'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew you gift  
that way

At college : but another which you had,  
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),

What came of that ?' 'You know,' said  
Frank, 'he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve  
books'—

And then to me demanding why ? 'Oh,  
sir,

He thought that nothing new was said,  
or else

Something so said 'twas nothing—that a  
truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day :  
God knows : he has a mint of reasons : ask

It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,'  
said Hall,

'Why take the style of those heroic times ?  
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,

Nor we those times ; and why should any  
man

Remodel models ? these twelve books of  
mine

Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-  
worth,

And sparkled keen with frost against the  
hilt :

For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work  
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he  
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift  
mind,

In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd  
There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the  
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded  
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere :

'Hast thou perform'd my mission which  
I gave?

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast  
heard?

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :  
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint  
and pale :

'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy  
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd  
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere  
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing  
I bid thee, watch, and lightly bring me  
word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time  
Across the ridge, and paced beside the  
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased, he  
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud,

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,  
Which might have pleased the eyes of  
many men.

What good should follow this, if this were  
done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to dis-  
obey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand  
An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what he  
does.

What record, or what relic of my lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath  
And rumours of a doubt? but were this  
kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty  
kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,  
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,  
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.  
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the  
deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills."

So might some old man speak in the  
aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honour and much fame  
were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own  
conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded  
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing  
heavily :

'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast  
heard?

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

'I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much  
in wrath.

'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what  
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious  
hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.  
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time may prosper, get thee  
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and  
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,  
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the  
sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The  
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendour of the  
moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd  
in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,  
Seen where the moving isles of winter  
shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.  
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :

But ere he dipt the surface, rose an aim  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

And caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the  
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing  
thicker breath :

'Now see I by thine eyes that this is  
done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or  
seen ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :  
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the  
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,  
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,  
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-  
ing him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

That caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the  
mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breath-  
ing hard :

'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I  
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my  
weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear  
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall  
die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half  
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found  
not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on  
one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid  
hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of  
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted  
hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed  
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd

the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,  
'Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to  
ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as  
he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a  
cry

Before. His own thought drove him, like  
a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and  
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,  
as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smutten with the dint of armed  
heels—  
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.  
Then saw they how there hove a dusky  
barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
Beneath them ; and descending they were  
ware  
That all the decks were dense with stately  
forms  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream  
—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and  
from them rose  
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one  
comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the  
world.  
Then murmur'd Arthur, ' Place me in  
the barge,'  
And to the barge they came. There those  
three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the King,  
and wept.  
But she, that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
chafed his hands,  
And call'd him by his name, complaining  
loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his brow  
Striped with dark blood : for all his face  
was white  
And colourless, and like the wither'd  
moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing  
east ;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops  
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd  
with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in  
rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.  
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,  
' Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I  
go ?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my  
eyes ?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble  
chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.  
Such times have been not since the light  
that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is  
dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world ;  
And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the  
years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds.'  
And slowly answered Arthur from the  
barge :  
' The old order changeth, yielding place  
to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the  
world.  
Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?  
I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done  
May He within Himself make pure ! but  
thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,  
let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day  
For what are men better than sheep or  
goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of  
prayer

Both for themselves and those who call  
them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of  
God.

But now farewell. I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion ;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-  
lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer  
sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and  
sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light,  
that long

Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,  
flared and fell :

At which the Parson, sent to sleep with  
sound,

And waked with silence, grunted 'Good !'  
but we

Sat rapt : it was the tone with which he  
read—

Perhaps some modern touches here and  
there

Redeem'd it from the charge of nothing-  
ness—

Or else we loved the man, and prized his

I know not : but we sitting, as I said,  
The cock crew loud ; as at that time  
of year

The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn :  
Then Francis, muttering, like a man  
ill-used,

'There now—that's nothing !' drew a  
little back,

And drove his heel into the smoulder'd  
log,

That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue :  
And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I seem'd

To sail with Arthur under looming shores,  
Point after point ; till on to dawn, when  
dreams

Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,  
To me, methought, who waited with a  
crowd,

There came a bark that, blowing forward,  
bore

King Arthur, like a modern gentleman  
Of stateliest port ; and all the people  
cried,

'Arthur is come again : he cannot die.'  
Then those that stood upon the hills  
behind

Repeated—'Come again, and thence as  
fair ;'

And, further inland, voices echoed—  
'Come

With all good things, and war shall be  
no more.'

At this a hundred bells began to peal,  
That with the sound I woke, and heard  
indeed

The clear church-bells ring in the  
Christmas-morn.

## THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER ;

### OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,  
When I and Eustace from the city went  
To see the Gardener's Daughter ; I and he,  
Brothers in Art ; a friendship so complete  
Portion'd in halves between us, that we  
grew

The fable of the city where we dwelt.

My Eustace might have sat for Hercules ;  
 So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.  
 He, by some law that holds in love, and  
     draws  
 The greater to the lesser, long desired  
 A certain miracle of symmetry,  
 A miniature of loveliness, all grace  
 Summ'd up and closed in little ;—Juliet,  
     she  
 So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she  
 To me myself, for some three careless  
     moons,  
 The summer pilot of an empty heart  
 Unto the shores of nothing ! Know you not  
 Such touches are but embassies of love,  
 To tamper with the feelings, ere he found  
 Empire for life ? but Eustace painted her,  
 And said to me, she sitting with us then,  
 ' When will *you* paint like this ? ' and I  
     replied,  
 ( My words were half in earnest, half in  
     jest, )  
 ' 'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,  
     unperceived,  
 A more ideal Artist he than all,  
 Came, drew your pencil from you, made  
     those eyes  
 Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair  
 More black than ashbuds in the front of  
     March.'  
 And Juliet answer'd laughing, ' Go and see  
 The Gardener's daughter : trust me, after  
     that,  
 You scarce can fail to match his master-  
     piece.'  
 And up we rose, and on the spur we went  
     Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite  
 Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love  
 News from the humming city comes to it  
 In sound of funeral or of marriage bells ;  
 And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you  
     hear  
 The windy clanging of the minster clock ;  
 Although between it and the garden lies  
 A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad  
     stream,  
 That, stir'd with languid pulses of the oar,  
 Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,  
 Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge  
 Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between  
 Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd  
     kine,  
 And all about the large lime feathers low,  
 The lime a summer home of murmurous  
     wings.  
 In that still place she, hoarded in herself,  
 Grew, seldom seen ; not less among us  
     lived  
 Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not  
     heard  
 Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter ? Where  
     was he,  
 So blunt in memory, so old at heart,  
 At such a distance from his youth in grief,  
 That, having seen, forgot ? The common  
     mouth,  
 So gross to express delight, in praise of  
     her  
 Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,  
 And Beauty such a mistress of the world.  
 And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,  
 Would play with flying forms and images,  
 Yet this is also true, that, long before  
 I look'd upon her, when I heard her name  
 My heart was like a prophet to my heart,  
 And told me I should love. A crowd of  
     hopes,  
 That sought to sow themselves like  
     winged seeds,  
 Born out of everything I heard and saw,  
 Flutter'd about my senses and my soul ;  
 And vague desires, like fitful blasts of  
     balm  
 To one that travels quickly, made the air  
 Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,  
 That verged upon them, sweeter than the  
     dream  
 Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark  
     East,  
 Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.  
 And sure this orbit of the memory folds  
 For ever in itself the day we went  
 To see her. All the land in flowery  
     squares,  
 Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,  
 Smelt of the coming summer, as one large  
     cloud  
 Drew downward : but all else of heaven  
     was pure

Up to the Sun, and May from verge to  
 verge,  
 And May with me from head to heel.  
 And now,  
 As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were  
 The hour just flown, that morn with all  
 its sound,  
 (For those old Mays had thrice the life  
 of these,) Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to  
 graze,  
 And, where the hedge-row cuts the  
 pathway, stood,  
 Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,  
 And lowing to his fellows. From the  
 woods  
 Came voices of the well-contented doves.  
 The lark could scarce get out his notes  
 for joy,  
 But shook his song together as he near'd  
 His happy home, the ground. To left  
 and right,  
 The cuckoo told his name to all the hills;  
 The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm;  
 The redcap whistled; and the nightingale  
 Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.  
 And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said  
 to me,  
 'Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,  
 These birds have joyful thoughts. Think  
 you they sing  
 Like poets, from the vanity of song?  
 Or have they any sense of why they sing?  
 And would they praise the heavens for  
 what they have?'  
 And I made answer, 'Were there nothing  
 else  
 For which to praise the heavens but only  
 love,  
 That only love were cause enough for  
 praise.'  
 Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read  
 my thought,  
 And on we went; but ere an hour had  
 pass'd,  
 We reach'd a meadow slanting to the  
 North;  
 Down which a well-worn pathway counted  
 us  
 To one green wicket in a privet hedge;

This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk  
 Tho' crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;  
 And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume,  
 blew  
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.  
 The garden stretches southward. In the  
 midst  
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of  
 shade.  
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily  
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.  
 'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps  
 the house.'  
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards  
 He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he ceased  
 I turn'd,  
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her  
 there.  
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern  
 rose,  
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale  
 had caught,  
 And blown across the walk. One arm  
 aloft—  
 Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the  
 shape—  
 Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood,  
 A single stream of all her soft brown hair  
 Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the  
 flowers  
 Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering  
 Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—  
 Ah, happy shade—and still went waver-  
 ing down,  
 But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have  
 danced  
 The greensward into greener circles, dipt,  
 And mix'd with shadows of the common  
 ground!  
 But the full day dwelt on her brows, and  
 sunn'd  
 Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,  
 And doubled his own warmth against her  
 lips,  
 And on the bounteous wave of such a  
 breast  
 As never pencil drew. Half light, half  
 shade,  
 She stood, a sight to make an old man  
 young.

So rapt, we near'd the house ; but she,  
     a Rose  
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,  
 Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance  
     turn'd  
 Into the world without ; till close at hand,  
 And almost ere I knew mine own intent,  
 This murmur broke the stillness of that  
     air  
 Which blooded round about her :  
     'Ah, one rose,  
 One rose, but one, by those fair fingers  
     cull'd,  
 Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on  
     lips  
 Less exquisite than thine.'  
     She look'd : but all  
 Suffused with blushes—neither self-pos-  
     sess'd  
 Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and  
     that,  
 Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,  
 And dropt the branch she held, and turn-  
     ing, wound  
 Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her  
     lips  
 For some sweet answer, tho' no answer  
     came,  
 Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,  
 And moved away, and left me, statue-like,  
 In act to render thanks.  
     I, that whole day,  
 Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there  
 Till every daisy slept, and Love's white  
     star  
 Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the  
     dusk  
 So home we went, and all the livelong  
     way  
 With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me  
 'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the top  
     of Art.  
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim  
 The Titanic Floa Will you match  
 My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master,  
     Love,  
 A more ideal Artist he than all.'  
 So home I went, but could not sleep  
     for joy,  
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,

Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,  
 And shaping faithful record of the glance  
 That graced the giving—such a noise of  
     life  
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a  
     voice  
 Call'd to me from the years to come, and  
     such  
 A length of blight horizon rimm'd the  
     dark.  
 And all that night I heard the watchman  
     peal  
 The sliding season : all that night I heard  
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy  
     hours.  
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,  
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,  
 Distilling odours on me as they went  
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.  
 Love at first sight, first-born, and heir  
     to all,  
 Made this night thus. Henceforward  
     squall nor storm  
 Could keep me from that Eden where she  
     dwelt.  
 Light prettexts drew me ; sometimes a  
     Dutch love  
 For tulips ; then for roses, moss or musk,  
 To grace my city rooms, or fruits and  
     cream  
 Served in the weeping elm ; and more and  
     more  
 A word could bring the colour to my  
     cheek ;  
 A thought would fill my eyes with happy  
     dew ;  
 Love trebled life within me, and with  
     each  
 The year increased.  
     The daughters of the year,  
 One after one, thro' that still garden  
     pass'd ;  
 Each gailanded with her peculiar flower  
 Danced into light, and died into the  
     shade ;  
 And each in passing touch'd with some  
     new grace  
 Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by  
     day,  
 Like one that never can be wholly known,

Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought  
 an hour  
 For Eustace, when I heard his deep ' I  
 will,'  
 Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to  
 hold  
 From thence thro' all the worlds : but I  
 rose up  
 Full of his bliss, and following her dark  
 eyes  
 Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reach'd  
 The wicket-gate, and found her standing  
 there.

There sat we down upon a garden  
 mound,  
 Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the third,  
 Between us, in the circle of his arms  
 Enwound us both ; and over many a range  
 Of waning lime the gray cathedral towers,  
 Across a hazy glimmer of the west,  
 Reveal'd their shining windows. from  
 them clash'd  
 The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time  
 we play'd,  
 We spoke of other things ; we couised  
 about  
 The subject most at heart, more near and  
 near,  
 Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling  
 round  
 The central wish, until we settled there.

Then, in that time and place, I spoke  
 to her,  
 Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,  
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,  
 Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,  
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved ;  
 And in that time and place she answer'd  
 me,  
 And in the compass of three little words,  
 More musical than ever came in one,  
 The silver fragments of a broken voice,  
 Made me most happy, faltering, ' I am  
 thine.'

Shall I cease here ? Is this enough to  
 say  
 That my desire, like all strongest hopes,  
 By its own energy fulfil'd itself,  
 Merged in completion ? Would you learn  
 at full

How passion rose thro' circumstantial  
 grades

Beyond all grades develop'd ? and indeed  
 I had not staid so long to tell you all,  
 But while I mused came Memory with  
 sad eyes,

Holding the folded annals of my youth ;  
 And while I mused, Love with knit brows  
 went by,

And with a flying finger swept my lips,  
 And spake, ' Be wise : not easily forgiven  
 Are those, who setting wide the doors that  
 bar

The secret bridal chambers of the heart,  
 Let in the day.' Here, then, my words  
 have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-  
 wells—

Of that which came between, more sweet  
 than each,

In whispers, like the whispers of the  
 leaves

That tremble round a nightingale—in  
 sighs

Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-  
 ance,

Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I  
 not tell

Of difference, reconciliation, pledges  
 given,

And vows, where there was never need  
 of vows,

And kisses, where the heart on one wild  
 leap

Hung tranced from all pulsation, as above  
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces  
 pale

Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting  
 stars ;

Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-lit,  
 Spread the light haze along the river-  
 shores,

And in the hollows ; or as once we met  
 Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering  
 rain

Night slid down one long stream of sigh-  
 ing wind,

And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.

But this whole hour your eyes have  
 been intent

On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what it holds

May not be dwelt on by the common day.  
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise thy soul ;

Make thine heart ready with thine eyes :  
the time

Is come to raise the veil.

Behold her there,  
As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,  
My first, last love ; the idol of my youth,  
The dawning of my manhood, and, alas !  
Now the most blessed memory of mine age.

## DORA.

'WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his son,  
And she his niece. He often look'd at them,

And often thought, 'I'll make them man  
and wife.'

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd towards William ; but the youth, because

He had been always with her in the house,  
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day  
When Allan call'd his son, and said,  
'My son :

I married late, but I would wish to see  
My grandchild on my knees before I die :  
And I have set my heart upon a match.  
Now therefore look to Dora ; she is well  
To look to ; thirty too beyond her age.  
She is my brother's daughter : he and I  
Had once had words, and parted, and  
he died

In foreign lands ; but for his sake I bred  
His daughter Dora : take her for your  
wife ;

For I have wish'd this marriage, night  
and day,

For many years.' But William answer'd  
short ;

'I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,  
I will not marry Dora ' Then the old man  
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,  
and said :

'You will not, boy ! you dare to answer  
thus !

But in my time a father's word was law,  
And so it shall be now for me. Look to  
it ;

Consider, William : take a month to  
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish ;  
O, by the Lord that made me, you shall  
pack,

And never more darken my doors again.'  
But William answer'd madly ; bit his  
lips,

And broke away. The more he look'd  
at her

The less he liked her ; and his ways were  
harsh ;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then  
before

The month was out he left his father's  
house,

And hired himself to work within the  
fields ;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and  
wed

A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,  
Allan call'd

His niece and said : 'My girl, I love you  
well ;

But if you speak with him that was my  
son,

Or change a word with her he calls his  
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is  
law.'

And Dora promised, being meek. She  
thought,

'It cannot be : my uncle's mind will  
change !'

And days went on, and there was born  
a boy

To William ; then distresses came on  
him ;

And day by day he pass'd his father's  
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father help'd him  
not.

But Dora stored what little she could  
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did they  
know

Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized  
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary Mary sat  
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and  
thought

Haid things of Dora. Dora came and  
said :

' I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me  
This evil came on William at the first.

But, Mary, for the sake of him that's  
gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he  
chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you .  
You know there has not been for these  
five years

So full a harvest : let me take the boy,  
And I will set him in my uncle's eye  
Among the wheat, that when his heart  
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,  
And bless him for the sake of him that's  
gone.'

And Dora took the child, and went  
her way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound  
That was unsown, where many poppies  
grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field  
And spied her not ; for none of all his  
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;  
And Dora would have risen and gone to  
him,

But her heart fail'd her ; and the reapers  
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was  
dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose  
and took

The child once more, and sat upon the  
mound ;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers  
That grew about, and tied it round his hat  
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye  
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field  
He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said : ' Where were you  
yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing  
here ?'

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,  
And answer'd softly, ' This is William's  
child !'

' And did I not,' said Allan, ' did I not  
Forbid you, Dora ?' Dora said again :

' Do with me as you will, but take the  
child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's  
gone !'

And Allan said, ' I see it is a trick  
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you !  
You knew my word was law, and yet you  
dared

To slight it Well—for I will take the  
boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more.'

So saying, he took the boy that cried  
aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of  
flowers fell

At Dora's feet She bow'd upon her  
hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the  
field,

More and more distant. She bow'd  
down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,  
And all the things that had been. She  
bow'd down

And wept in secret ; and the reapers  
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was  
dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and  
stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy  
Was not with Dora. She broke out in  
praise

To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.  
And Dora said, ' My uncle took the boy ;

But, Mary, let me live and work with you :  
He says that he will never see me more.'

Then answer'd Mary, ' This shall never be,  
That thou shouldst take my trouble on  
thyself :

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,  
 For he will teach him hardness, and to slight  
 His mother ; therefore thou and I will go,  
 And I will have my boy, and bring him home ;  
 And I will beg of him to take thee back :  
 But if he will not take thee back again,  
 Then thou and I will live within one house,  
 And work for William's child, until he grows  
 Of age to help us.'

So the women kiss'd

Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm  
 The door was off the latch . they peep'd,  
 and saw  
 The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,  
 Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,  
 And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,  
 Like one that loved him : and the lad stretch'd out  
 And babbled for the golden seal, that hung  
 From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.  
 Then they came in : but when the boy beheld  
 His mother, he cried out to come to her :  
 And Allan set him down, and Mary said :  
 ' O Father !—if you let me call you so—  
 I never came a-begging for myself,  
 Or William, or this child ; but now I come  
 For Dora . take her back ; she loves you well.  
 O Sir, when William died, he died at peace  
 With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he said,  
 He could not ever rue his marrying me—  
 I had been a patient wife : but, Sir, he said  
 That he was wrong to cross his father thus :

" God bless him ! " he said, " and may he never know  
 The troubles I have gone thro' ! " Then he turn'd  
 His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am !  
 But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you  
 Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight  
 His father's memory ; and take Dora back,  
 And let all this be as it was before.'

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face  
 By Mary. There was silence in the room ;  
 And all at once the old man burst in sobs :—

' I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.  
 I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.  
 May God forgive me !—I have been to blame.  
 Kiss me, my children.'

Then they clung about  
 The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.  
 And all the man was broken with remorse ;  
 And all his love came back a hundred-fold ;  
 And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child  
 Thinking of William.

So those four abode  
 Within one house together ; and as years  
 Went forward, Mary took another mate ;  
 But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

## AUDLEY COURT.

' THE Bull, the Fleece are ciamm'd, and not a room  
 For love or money. Let us picnic there  
 At Audley Court '

I spoke, while Audley feast  
 Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,  
 To Francis, with a basket on his arm,  
 To Francis just alighted from the boat,

And breathing of the sea. 'With all my heart,'  
 Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,  
 And rounded by the stillness of the beach  
 To where the bay runs up its latest horn.  
 We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd  
 The flat red granite; so by many a sweep  
 Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reach'd  
 The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all  
 The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,  
 And cross'd the garden to the gardener's lodge,  
 With all its casements bedded, and its walls  
 And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.  
 There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid  
 A damask napkin wrought with hoise and bound,  
 Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,  
 And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,  
 Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,  
 Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks  
 Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,  
 A flask of cider from his father's vats,  
 Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat  
 And talk'd old matters over; who was dead,  
 Who married, who was like to be, and how  
 The races went, and who would rent the hall:  
 Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was  
 This season; glancing thence, discuss'd the farm,  
 The four-field system, and the price of grain;  
 And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,  
 And came again together on the king  
 With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;  
 And, while the blackbird on the pippin hung

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang—  
 'Oh! who would fight and march and countermarch,  
 Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,  
 And shovell'd up into some bloody trench  
 Where no one knows? but let me live my life.  
 'Oh! who would cast and balance at a desk,  
 Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,  
 Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints  
 Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.  
 'Who'd seive the state? for if I carved my name  
 Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,  
 I might as well have traced it in the sands;  
 The sea wastes all—but let me live my life.  
 'Oh! who would love? I wou'd a woman once,  
 But she was sharper than an eastern wind,  
 And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn  
 Turns from the sea; but let me live my life.'  
 He sang his song, and I replied with mine:  
 I found it in a volume, all of songs,  
 Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,  
 His books—the more the pity, so I said—  
 Came to the hammer here in March—and this—  
 I set the words, and added names I knew.  
 'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:  
 Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,  
 And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.  
 'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;  
 Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,  
 For thou art fairer than all else that is.  
 'Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:  
 Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:  
 I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.  
 'I go, but I return: I would I were  
 The pilot of the darkness and the dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me.'

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,

The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,

My friend; and I, that having where-withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life  
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,  
Did what I would; but ere the night we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf  
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd  
The limit of the hills; and as we sank  
From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbour-buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,  
With one green sparkle ever and anon  
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

## WALKING TO THE MAIL.

*John.* I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh the meadows look  
Above the river, and, but a month ago,  
The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.  
Is yon plantation where this byway joins  
The turnpike?

*James.* Yes.

*John.* And when does this come by?

*James.* The mail? At one o'clock.

*John.* What is it now?

*James.* A quarter to.

*John.* Whose house is that I see?  
No, not the County Member's with the vane:

Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and half

A score of gables.

*James.* That? Sir Edward Head's:  
But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.

*John.* Oh, his. He was not broken.

*James.* No, sir, he,  
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood  
That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid his face

From all men, and commencing with himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily life—  
That keeps us all in order more or less—  
And sick of home went overseas for change.

*John.* And whither?

*James.* Nay, who knows? he's here and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with him,  
As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.

*John.* What's that?

*James.* You saw the man—on Monday, was it?—

There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made a bridge;

And there he caught the younker tickling trout—

Caught *in flagrante*—what's the Latin word?—

*Delicto*: but his house, for so they say,  
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at doors,

And rummaged like a rat: no servant stay'd:

The farmer vext packs up his beds and chaus,

And all his household stuff; and with his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,  
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him, 'What!

You're fitting!' 'Yes, we're fitting,' says the ghost

(For they had pack'd the thing among the beds,)

'Oh well,' says he, 'you fitting with us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again.'

*John.* He left his wife behind; for so I heard.

*James.* He left her, yes. I met my lady once :

A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.

*John.* Oh yet but I remember, ten years back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter thing :  
A body slight and round, and like a pea  
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot  
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin  
As clean and white as pivet when it flowers.

*James.* Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottage,  
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame and pride,

New things and old, himself and her, she sour'd

To what she is a nature never kind !

Like men, like manners : like breeds like, they say :

Kind nature is the best · those manners next

That fit us like a nature second-hand ;  
Which are indeed the manners of the great.

*John.* But I had heard it was this bill that past,

And fear of change at home, that drove him hence.

*James.* That was the last drop in the cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff brought

A Chartist pike. You should have seen him wince

As from a venomous thing : he thought himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry  
Should break his sleep by night, and his nice eyes

Should see the raw mechanic's bloody thumbs

Sweat on his blazon'd chairs ; but, sir, you know

That these two parties still divide the world—

Of those that want, and those that have : and still

The same old sore breaks out from age to age

With much the same result. Now I myself,

A Tory to the quick, was as a boy  
Destructive, when I had not what I would  
I was at school—a college in the South :  
There lived a flayflint near ; we stole his fruit,

His hens, his eggs ; but there was law for us ;

We paid in person. He had a sow, sir. She,

With meditative grunts of much content,  
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the college tower

From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew stair

With hand and rope we haled the groaning sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she pigg'd.

Large range of prospect had the mother sow,

And but for daily loss of one she loved  
As one by one we took them—but for this—

As never sow was higher in this world—  
Might have been happy : but what lot is pure ?

We took them all, till she was left alone  
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,  
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

*John.* They found you out ?

*James.* Not they.

*John.* Well—after all—  
What know we of the secret of a man ?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us, who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool the world,

Which charts us all in its coarse blacks or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm,  
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows

To Pity—more from ignorance than will.

But put your best foot forward, or I  
fear  
That we shall miss the mail · and here it  
comes  
With five at top: as quaint a four-in-hand  
As you shall see—three pyebalds and a  
roan.

## EDWIN MORRIS;

## OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,  
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a  
year,

My one Oasis in the dust and drouth  
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:

See here, my doing: curves of mountain,  
bridge,

Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built  
When men knew how to build, upon a  
rock

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:  
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,  
New-comers from the Mersey, million-  
aires,

Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chimnied  
bulk

Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake  
With Edwin Morris and with Edward  
Bull

The curate; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the  
names,

Long learned names of agaric, moss and  
fern,

Who forged a thousand theories of the  
rocks,

Who taught me how to skate, to row, to  
swim,

Who read me rhymes elaborately good,  
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he  
seem'd

All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail

And once I ask'd him of his early life,  
And his first passion; and he answer'd  
me;

And well his words became him: was he  
not

A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence  
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he  
spoke.

'My love for Nature is as old as I;  
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,  
And three rich sennights more, my love  
for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,  
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,  
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.

To some full music rose and sank the sun,  
And some full music seem'd to move and  
change

With all the varied changes of the dark,  
And either twilight and the day between;  
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again

Revolving toward fulfilment, made it  
sweet

To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to  
breathe.'

Or this or something like to this he  
spoke.

Then said the fat-faced curate Edward  
Bull,

'I take it, God made the woman for  
the man,

And for the good and increase of the  
world.

A pretty face is well, and this is well,  
To have a dame indoors, that trims us up,  
And keeps us tight; but these unreal  
ways

Seem but the theme of writers, and in-  
deed

Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid  
stuff.

I say, God made the woman for the man,  
And for the good and increase of the  
world.'

'Parson,' said I, 'you pitch the pipe  
too low:

But I have sudden touches, and can run  
My faith beyond my practice into his:

Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,  
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,  
I scarce have other music: yet say on.

What should one give to light on such a dream ?'

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

'Give?

Give all thou art,' he answer'd, and a light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek ;  
'I would have hid her needle in my heart,

To save her little finger from a scratch  
No deeper than the skin : my ears could hear

Her lightest breath ; her least remark  
was worth

The experience of the wise. I went and came ;

Her voice fled always thro' the summer land ;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy days !

The flower of each, those moments when we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more.'

Were not his words delicious, I a beast  
To take them as I did ? but something jarr'd ;

Whether he spoke too largely ; that there seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-conceit,

Or over-smoothness : howsoe'er it was,  
He scarcely hit my humour, and I said :

'Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone

Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,

As in the Latin song I learnt at school,  
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left ?

But you can talk : yours is a kindly vein :  
I have, I think, — Heaven knows — as much within ;

Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens  
Looks out of place : 'tis from no want in her :

It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,  
Or something of a wayward modern mind  
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right.'

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull :

'God made the woman for the use of man,

And for the good and increase of the world.'

And I and Edwin laughed ; and now we paused

About the windings of the marge to hear  
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms

And alders, garden-isles ; and now we left  
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran  
By ripply shallows of the lispings lake,  
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,  
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met ; one hour I had, no more :

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,  
The close, 'Your Letty, only yours ;' and this

Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran  
My craft aground, and heard with beating heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel ;

And out I stept, and up I crept : she moved,

Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers :

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ;  
and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed

In some new planet: a silent cousin stole  
Upon us and departed: 'Leave,' she  
cried,

'O leave me!' 'Never, dearest, never:  
here

I brave the worst:' and while we stood  
like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs  
And poodles yell'd within, and out they  
came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. 'What,  
with him!

Go' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus);  
'him!'

I choked. Again they shriek'd the  
burthen—'Him!'

Again with hands of wild rejection 'Go!—  
G! , get you in!' She went—and in one  
month

They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,  
To lands in Kent and messuages in York,  
And slight Sir Robert with his watery  
smile

And educated whisker. But for me,  
They set an ancient creditor to work.  
It seems 'I broke a close with force and  
arms:

There came a mystic token from the king  
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!  
I read, and fled by night, and flying  
turn'd:

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:  
I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the  
storm;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen  
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to  
hear

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long  
ago

I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed,  
It may be, for her own dear sake but this,  
She seems a part of those flesh days to me;  
For in the dust and drouth of London life  
She moves among my visions of the lake,  
While the prime swallow dips his wing,  
or then

While the gold-lily blows, and overhead  
The light cloud smoulders on the summer  
ciag

## ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,  
From scalp to sole one slough and crust  
of sin,

Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce  
meet

For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,  
I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold  
Of saintdom, and to clamour, mourn and  
sob,

Battering the gates of heaven with storms  
of prayer,

Have mercy, Lord, and take away my sin.  
Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty  
God,

This not be all in vain, that thrice ten  
years,

Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,  
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,  
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes  
and cramps,

A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,  
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne  
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and  
sleet, and snow;

And I had hoped that ere this period closed  
Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy  
rest,

Denying not these weather-beaten limbs  
The meed of saints, the white robe and  
the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord: I do not  
breathe,

Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.  
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were  
still

Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear,  
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,  
that crush'd

My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,  
Thou knowest I bore this better at the  
first,

For I was strong and hale of body then;  
And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt  
away,

Would chatter with the cold, and all my  
beard

Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,  
 I drown'd the whoopings of the owl with  
 sound  
 Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-  
 times saw  
 An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.  
 Now am I feeble grown; my end draws  
 nigh;  
 I hope my end draws nigh: half deaf I am,  
 So that I scarce can hear the people hum  
 About the column's base, and almost blind,  
 And scarce can recognise the fields I  
 know;  
 And both my thighs are rotted with the  
 dew;  
 Yet cease I not to clamour and to cry,  
 While my stiff spine can hold my weary  
 head,  
 Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the  
 stone,  
 Have mercy, mercy: take away my sin.  
 O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,  
 Who may be saved? who is it may be  
 saved?  
 Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?  
 Show me the man hath suffer'd more  
 than I.  
 For did not all thy martyrs die one death?  
 For either they were stoned, or crucified,  
 Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn  
 In twain beneath the ribs; but I die here  
 To-day, and whole years long, a life of  
 death.  
 Bear witness, if I could have found a way  
 (And heedfully I sifted all my thought)  
 More slowly-painful to subdue this home  
 Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,  
 I had not stinted practice, O my God.  
 For not alone this pillar-punishment,  
 Not this alone I bore: but while I lived  
 In the white convent down the valley there,  
 For many weeks about my loins I wore  
 The robe that haled the buckets from the  
 well,  
 Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;  
 And spake not of it to a single soul,  
 Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,  
 Betray'd my secret penance, so that all  
 My brethren marvel'd greatly. More  
 than this

I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.  
 Three winters, that my soul might  
 grow to thee,  
 I lived up there on yonder mountain  
 side.  
 My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay  
 Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;  
 Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist,  
 and twice  
 Black'd with thy branding thunder, and  
 sometimes  
 Sucking the damps for drink, and eating  
 not,  
 Except the spare chance-gift of those  
 that came  
 To touch my body and be heal'd, and live:  
 And they say then that I work'd miracles,  
 Whereof my fame is loud amongst man-  
 kind,  
 Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou,  
 O God,  
 Knowest alone whether this was or no.  
 Have mercy, mercy! cover all my sin.  
 Then, that I might be more alone  
 with thee,  
 Three years I lived upon a pillar, high  
 Six cubits, and three years on one of  
 twelve;  
 And twice three years I crouch'd on one  
 that rose  
 Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew  
 Twice ten long weary weary years to this,  
 That numbers forty cubits from the soil.  
 I think that I have borne as much as  
 this—  
 Or else I dream—and for so long a time,  
 If I may measure time by yon slow light,  
 And this high dial, which my sorrow  
 crowns—  
 So much—even so.  
 And yet I know not well,  
 For that the evil ones come here, and say,  
 'Fall down, O Simeon: thou hast suffer'd  
 long  
 For ages and for ages!' then they prate  
 Of penances I cannot have gone thro',  
 Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,  
 Maybe for months, in such blind lethargies  
 That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are  
 choked.

But yet  
 Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all  
 the saints  
 Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on  
 earth  
 House in the shade of comfortable roofs,  
 Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-  
 some food,  
 And wear warm clothes, and even beasts  
 have stalls,  
 I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the  
 light,  
 Bow down one thousand and two hundred  
 times,  
 To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the  
 saints;  
 Or in the night, after a little sleep,  
 I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am  
 wet  
 With drenching dews, or stiff with crack-  
 ling frost  
 I wear an undress'd goatskin on my  
 back;  
 A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;  
 And in my weak, lean arms I lift the  
 cross,  
 And strive and wrestle with thee till I  
 die:  
 O mercy, mercy! wash away my sin.  
 O Lord, thou knowest what a man I  
 am;  
 A sinful man, conceived and born in sin:  
 'Tis their own doing; this is none of  
 mine;  
 Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for  
 this,  
 That here come those that worship me?  
 Ha! ha!  
 They think that I am somewhat. What  
 am I?  
 The silly people take me for a saint,  
 And bring me offerings of fruit and  
 flowers:  
 And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness  
 here)  
 Have all in all endured as much, and  
 more  
 Than many just and holy men, whose  
 names  
 Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.

Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.  
 What is it I can have done to merit this?  
 I am a sinner viler than you all.  
 It may be I have wrought some miracles,  
 And cured some halt and maim'd; but  
 what of that?  
 It may be, no one, even among the saints,  
 May match his pains with mine; but  
 what of that?  
 Yet do not rise; for you may look on me,  
 And in your looking you may kneel to  
 God.  
 Speak! is there any of you halt or maim'd?  
 I think you know I have some power  
 with Heaven  
 From my long penance: let him speak  
 his wish.  
 Yes, I can heal him. Power goes  
 forth from me.  
 They say that they are heal'd. Ah,  
 hark! they shout  
 'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,  
 God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,  
 God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,  
 Can I work miracles and not be saved?  
 This is not told of any. They were saints.  
 It cannot be but that I shall be saved;  
 Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,  
 'Behold a saint!'  
 And lower voices saint me from above.  
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis  
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere  
 death  
 Spreads more and more and more, that  
 God hath now  
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful  
 record all  
 My mortal archives.  
 O my sons, my sons,  
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname  
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,  
 The watcher on the column till the end,  
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine  
 bakes;  
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours  
 become  
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now  
 From my high nest of penance here pro-  
 claim  
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side

Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals  
 I lay,  
 A vessel full of sin : all hell beneath  
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my  
 sleeve,  
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.  
 I smote them with the cross ; they  
 swarm'd again.  
 In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd  
 my chest :  
 They flapp'd my light out as I read : I  
 saw  
 Their faces grow between me and my  
 book ;  
 With colt-like whinny and with hoggish  
 whine  
 They bust my playe. Yet this way  
 was left,  
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mortify  
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and  
 with thorns ;  
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may  
 be, fast  
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with  
 slow steps,  
 With slow, faint steps, and much exceed-  
 ing pain,  
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,  
 that still  
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the  
 praise :  
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought  
 fit,  
 Among the powers and princes of this  
 world,  
 To make me an example to mankind,  
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not  
 say  
 But that a time may come—yea, even  
 now,  
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the thresh-  
 old stairs  
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors  
 When you may worship me without re-  
 proach ;  
 For I will leave my relics in your land,  
 And you may carve a shrine about my  
 dust,  
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my  
 bones,

When I am gather'd to the glorious  
 saints.

While I spake then, a sting of shrewd-  
 est pain

Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike  
 change,

In passing, with a grosse film made thick  
 These heavy, horny eyes. The end ! the  
 end !

Surely the end ! What's here ? a shape,  
 a shade,

A flash of light. Is that the angel there  
 That holds a crown ? Come, blessed  
 brother, come.

I know thy glittering face. I waited  
 long ;

My brows are ready. What ! deny it  
 now ?

Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I  
 clutch it. Christ !

'Tis gone : 'tis here again ; the crown !  
 the crown !

So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,  
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,  
 Sweet ! sweet ! spikenard, and balm, and  
 frankincense.

Ah ! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints  
 I trust

That I am whole, and clean, and meet  
 for Heaven.

Speak, if there be a priest, a man of  
 God,

Among you there, and let him presently  
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,  
 And climbing up into my airy home,  
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament ;  
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,  
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,  
 A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,  
 And all this foolish people ; let them take  
 Example, pattern : lead them to thy light.

## THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls ;  
 Once more before my face  
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,  
 That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,  
Beneath its drift of smoke ;  
And ah ! with what delighted eyes  
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,  
Ere that, which in me burn'd,  
The love, that makes me thence a man,  
Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field  
I spoke without restraint,  
And with a larger faith appeal'd  
Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,  
And told him of my choice,  
Until he plagiarised a heart,  
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd under Heaven  
None else could understand ;  
I found him garrulously given,  
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply  
Is many a weary hour ;  
'Twere well to question him, and try  
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,  
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,  
Whose topmost branches can discern  
The roofs of Summer-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,  
If ever maid or spouse,  
As fair as my Olivia, came  
To rest beneath thy boughs —

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here  
Whatever maiden grace  
The good old Summers, year by year  
Made ripe in Summer-chace .

'Old Summers, when the monk was fat,  
And, issuing shorn and sleek,  
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat  
The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,  
And number'd bead, and shrift,  
Bluff Harry broke into the spence  
And turn'd the cowls adrift :

'And I have seen some score of those  
Fresh faces, that would thrive  
When his man-minded offset rose  
To chase the deer at five ;

'And all that from the town would stroll,  
Till that wild wind made work  
In which the gloomy brewer's soul  
Went by me, like a stork :

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,  
And others, passing praise,  
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud  
For puritanic stays :

'And I have shadow'd many a group  
Of beauties, that were born  
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,  
Or while the patch was worn ;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,  
About me leap'd and laugh'd  
The modish Cupid of the day,  
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick  
Each leaf into a gall)  
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,  
Is three times worth them all ;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,  
Have faded long ago ;  
But in these latter springs I saw  
Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the greens  
A baby-germ, to when  
The maiden blossoms of her teens  
Could number five from ten.

'I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,  
(And hear me with thine ears,)  
That, tho' I circle in the grain  
Five hundred rings of years—

'Yet, since I first could cast a shade,  
Did never creature pass  
So slightly, musically made,  
So light upon the grass:

'For as to fairies, that will flit  
To make the greensward fresh,  
I hold them exquisitely knit,  
But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,  
And overlook the chace;  
And from thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,  
That oft hast heard my vows,  
Declare when last Olivia came  
To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fan  
Was holden at the town;  
Her father left his good arm-chair,  
And rode his hunter down.

'And with him Albert came on his  
I look'd at him with joy:  
As cowslip unto oxlip is,  
So seems she to the boy

'An hour had past—and, sitting straight  
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,  
Her mother trundled to the gate  
Behind the dappled grays.

'But as for her, she stay'd at home,  
And on the roof she went,  
And down the way you use to come,  
She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut  
Upon the rosewood shelf;  
She left the new piano shut:  
She could not please herself.

'Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,  
And livelier than a lark  
She sent her voice thro' all the holt  
Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,  
And in the chase grew wild,  
As close as might be would he cling  
About the darling child:

'But light as any wind that blows  
So fleetly did she stiu,  
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,  
And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me play'd,  
And sang to me the whole  
Of those three stanzas that you made  
About my "giant bole,"

'And in a fit of fiolic mirth  
She strove to span my waist.  
Alas, I was so broad of girth,  
I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech  
That here beside me stands,  
That round me, clasping each in each,  
She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet  
As woodbine's fragile hold,  
Or when I feel about my feet  
The bern'd briony fold.'

O muffle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Sumner-chace!  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Sumner-place!

But tell me, did she read the name  
I carved with many vows  
When last with throbbing heart I came  
To rest beneath thy boughs?

'O yes, she wander'd round and round  
These knotted knees of mine,  
And found, and kiss'd the name she found,  
And sweetly murmur'd thine.

'A teardrop trembled from its source,  
And down my surface crept.  
My sense of touch is something coarse,  
But I believe she wept.

'Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,  
She glanced across the plain;  
But not a creature was in sight:  
She kiss'd me once again.

'Her kisses were so close and kind,  
That, trust me on my word,  
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,  
But yet my sap was stir'd:

'And even into my inmost ring  
A pleasure I discern'd,  
Like those blind motions of the Spring,  
That show the year is turn'd.

'Thrice-happy he that may caress  
The ringlet's waving balm—  
The cushions of whose touch may press  
The maiden's tender palm.

'I, rooted here among the groves  
But languidly adjust  
My vapid vegetable loves  
With anthesis and with dust:

'For ah! my friend, the days were brief  
Whereof the poets talk,  
When that, which breathes within the leaf,  
Could slip its bark and walk.

'But could I, as in times foregone,  
From spray, and branch, and stem,  
Have suck'd and gather'd into one  
The life that spreads in them,

'She had not found me so remiss;  
But lightly issuing thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,  
With usury thereto.'

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Pursue thy loves among the bowers  
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,  
Old oak, I love thee well;  
A thousand thanks for what I learn  
And what remains to tell.

'Tis little more: the day was warm;  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon her arm  
And at my feet she lay.

'Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.  
I breathed upon her eyes  
Thro' all the summer of my leaves  
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

'I took the swarming sound of life—  
The music from the town—  
The murmurs of the drum and fife  
And lull'd them in my own.

'Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,  
To light her shaded eye;  
A second flutter'd round her lip  
Like a golden butterfly;

'A third would glimmer on her neck  
To make the necklace shine;  
Another slid, a sunny fleck,  
From head to ankle fine,

'Then close and dark my arms I spread,  
And shadow'd all her rest—  
Dropt dew upon her golden head,  
An acorn in her breast.

'But in a pet she started up,  
And pluck'd it out, and drew  
My little oakling from the cup,  
And flung him in the dew.

'And yet it was a graceful gift—  
I felt a pang within  
As when I see the woodman lift  
His axe to slay my kin.

'I shook him down because he was  
The finest on the tree.  
He lies beside thee on the grass  
O kiss him once for me.

'O kiss him twice and thrice for me,  
That have no lips to kiss,  
For never yet was oak on lea  
Shall grow so fair as this.'

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,  
 Look further thro' the chace,  
 Spread upward till thy boughs discern  
 The front of Sumner-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,  
 That but a moment lay  
 Where fairer fruit of Love may rest  
 Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,  
 The warmth it thence shall win  
 To riper life may magnetise  
 The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,  
 Or lapse from hand to hand,  
 Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet  
 Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,  
 Nor wielded axe disjoint,  
 That art the fairest-spoken tree  
 From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery-top  
 All throats that gurgle sweet !  
 All starry culmination drop  
 Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !

All grass of silky feather grow—  
 And while he sinks or swells  
 The full south-breeze around thee blow  
 The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,  
 That under deeply strikes !  
 The northern morning o'er thee shoot,  
 High up, in silver spikes !

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,  
 But, rolling as in sleep,  
 Low thunders bring the mellow rain,  
 That makes thee broad and deep !

And hear me swear a solemn oath,  
 That only by thy side  
 Will I to Olive plight my troth,  
 And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,  
 She, Dryad-like, shall wear  
 Alternate leaf and acorn-ball  
 In wreath about her hair

And I will work in prose and rhyme,  
 And praise thee more in both  
 Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,  
 Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,  
 And mystic sentence spoke ;  
 And more than England honours that,  
 Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode  
 Till all the paths were dim,  
 And far below the Roundhead rode,  
 And humm'd a sully hymn.

### LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly close,  
 What sequel ? Streaming eyes and break-  
 ing hearts ?

Or all the same as if he had not been ?  
 Not so Shall Error in the round of  
 time

Still farther Truth ? O shall the braggart  
 shout

For some blind glimpse of freedom work  
 itself

Thio' madness, hated by the wise, to law  
 System and empire ? Sin itself be found  
 The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun ?  
 And only he, this wonder, dead, become  
 Mere highway dust ? or year by year alone  
 Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,  
 Nightmare of youth, the spectre of him-  
 self ?

If this were thus, if this, indeed, were  
 all,

Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,  
 The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless  
 days,

The long mechanic paces to and fro,  
 The set gray life, and apathetic end.  
 But am I not the nobler thro' thy love ?  
 O three times less unworthy ! likewise  
 thou

Art more thro' Love, and greater than  
thy years,  
The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon  
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will  
bring  
The drooping flower of knowledge changed  
to fruit  
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in  
Time,  
And that which shapes it to some perfect  
end.  
Will some one say, Then why not ill  
for good?  
Why took ye not your pastime? To that  
man  
My work shall answer, since I knew the  
right  
And did it; for a man is not as God,  
But then most Godlike being most a man.  
—So let me think 'tis well for thee and  
me—  
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine  
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart  
so slow  
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,  
When eyes, love-languid thro' half tears  
would dwell  
One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,  
Then not to dare to see! when thy low  
voice,  
Faltering, would break its syllables, to  
keep  
My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a  
leash,  
And not leap forth and fall about thy  
neck,  
And on thy bosom (deep desired relief!)  
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that  
weigh'd  
Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!  
For Love himself took part against  
himself  
To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—  
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated  
—came  
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and  
mine,  
And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy  
bride,'  
She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard  
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—  
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me:  
Hard is my doom and thine: thou  
knowest it all.  
Could Love part thus? was it not well  
to speak,  
To have spoken once? It could not but  
be well.  
The slow sweet hours that bring us all  
things good,  
The slow sad hours that bring us all  
things ill,  
And all good things from evil, brought  
the night  
In which we sat together and alone,  
And to the want, that hollow'd all the  
heart,  
Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,  
That burn'd upon its object thro' such  
tears  
As flow but once a life.  
The trance gave way  
To those caresses, when a hundred times  
In that last kiss, which never was the last,  
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and  
died.  
Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the  
words  
That make a man feel strong in speaking  
truth;  
Till now the dark was worn, and overhead  
The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd  
In that brief night; the summer night,  
that paused  
Among her stars to hear us; stars that  
hung  
Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of  
Time  
Spun round in station, but the end had  
come.  
O then like those, who clench their  
nerves to rush  
Upon their dissolution, we two rose,  
There—closing like an individual life—  
In one blind cry of passion and of pain,  
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,  
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd  
it,  
And bade adieu for ever.

Live—yet live—  
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing  
 all  
 Life needs for life is possible to will—  
 Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be tended  
 by  
 My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross  
 thy thoughts  
 Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou  
 For calmer hours to Memory's darkest  
 hold,  
 If not to be forgotten—not at once—  
 Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy  
 dreams,  
 O might it come like one that looks con-  
 tent,  
 With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,  
 And point thee forward to a distant light,  
 Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart  
 And leave thee freer, till thou wake  
 refresh'd  
 Then when the first low matin-chirp hath  
 grown  
 Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow  
 of pearl  
 Far furrowing into light the mounded  
 rack,  
 Beyond the fair green field and eastern  
 sea.

### THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which  
 Leonard wrote :  
 It was last summer on a tour in Wales :  
 Old James was with me : we that day  
 had been  
 Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leonard  
 there,  
 And found him in Llanberis : then we  
 crost  
 Between the lakes, and clamber'd half  
 way up  
 The counter side ; and that same song of  
 his  
 He told me ; for I banter'd him, and  
 swore  
 They said he lived shut up within himself,  
 A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,

That, setting the *how much* before the  
*how*,  
 Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech,  
 ' Give,  
 Cram us with all,' but count not me the  
 herd !  
 To which 'They call me what they  
 will,' he said :  
 ' But I was born too late : the fair new  
 forms,  
 That float about the threshold of an age,  
 Like truths of Science waiting to be  
 caught—  
 Catch me who can, and make the catcher  
 crown'd—  
 Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.  
 But if you care indeed to listen, hear  
 These measured words, my work of  
 yestermorn.  
 ' We sleep and wake and sleep, but all  
 things move ;  
 The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun ;  
 The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her  
 ellipse ;  
 And human things returning on them-  
 selves  
 Move onward, leading up the golden year.  
 ' Ah, tho' the times, when some new  
 thought can bud,  
 Are but as poets' seasons when they  
 flower,  
 Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,  
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their  
 march,  
 And slow and sure comes up the golden  
 year.  
 ' When wealth no more shall rest in  
 mounded heaps,  
 But smit with freer light shall slowly  
 melt  
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,  
 And light shall spread, and man be liker  
 man  
 Thro' all the season of the golden year.  
 ' Shall eagles not be eagles ? wrens be  
 wrens ?  
 If all the world were falcons, what of  
 that ?  
 The wonder of the eagle were the less,  
 But he not less the eagle. Happy days

Roll onward, leading up the golden year.  
 'Fly, happy happy sails, and bear the  
 Press ;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross ;  
 Knit land to land, and blowing haven-  
 waid

With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear  
 of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

'But we grow old. Ah ! when shall  
 all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal Peace  
 Lie like a shaft of light across the land,  
 And like a lane of beams athwart the  
 sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden year ?'

Thus far he flow'd, and ended ; where-  
 upon

'Ah, folly !' in mimic cadence answer'd  
 James—

'Ah, folly ! for it lies so far away,  
 Not in our time, nor in our children's  
 time,

'Tis like the second world to us that live ;  
 'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on  
 Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year.'

With that he struck his staff against  
 the rocks

And broke it,—James,—you know him,  
 —old, but full

Of force and choler, and firm upon his  
 feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter woods,  
 O'erfLOURISH'd with the hoary clematis :  
 Then added, all in heat :

'What stuff is this !

Old writers push'd the happy season  
 back,—

The more fools they,—we forward :  
 dreamers both :

You most, that in an age, when every  
 hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the  
 death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman,  
 rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not  
 plunge

His hand into the bag : but well I know

That unto him who works, and feels he  
 works,

This same grand year is ever at the  
 doors.'

He spoke ; and, high above, I heard  
 them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great  
 echo flap

And buffet round the hills, from bluff to  
 bluff.

### ULYSSES.

IT little profits that an idle king,

By this still hearth, among these barren  
 crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and  
 dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,

That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and  
 know not me.

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink  
 Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd  
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with  
 those

That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and  
 when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades

Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;

For always roaming with a hungry heart  
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of  
 men

And manners, climates, councils, govern-  
 ments,

Myself not least, but honour'd of them  
 all ;

And drunk delight of battle with my  
 peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy  
 Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met ;

Yet all experience is an arch where thro'  
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose  
 margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !  
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled  
 on life

Were all too little, and of one to me

Little remains : but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something  
more,

A binger of new things ; and vile it  
were

For some three suns to stoie and hoard  
myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human  
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—  
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
This labour, by slow prudence to make  
mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
Most blameless is he, centred in the  
sphere

Of common duties, decent not to fail  
In offices of tenderness, and pay  
Meet adoration to my household gods,  
When I am gone. He works his work,  
I mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs  
her sail :

There gloom the dark broad seas. My  
mariners,  
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and  
thought with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and  
opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I  
are old ;

Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;  
Death closes all : but something ere the  
end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be  
done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with  
Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the  
rocks :

The long day wanes : the slow moon  
climbs : the deep

Moans round with many voices. Come,  
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.

Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose  
holds

To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
down :

It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we  
knew.

Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and  
tho'

We are not now that strength which in  
old days

Moved earth and heaven ; that which we  
are, we are ;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong  
in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

### TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and  
fall,

The vapours weep their burthen to the  
ground,

Man comes and tills the field and lies  
beneath,

And after many a summer dies the swan.  
Me only cruel immortality

Consumes . I wither slowly in thine arms,  
Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a  
dream

The ever-silent spaces of the East,  
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of  
morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a  
man—

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he  
seem'd

To his great heart none other than a God !  
I ask'd thee, ' Give me immortality.'

Then didst thou grant mine asking with  
a smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how they  
give.

But thy strong Hours indignant work'd  
 their wills,  
 And beat me down and mar'd and wasted  
 me,  
 And tho' they could not end me, left me  
 maim'd  
 To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
 Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
 And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,  
 Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,  
 Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
 Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill  
 with tears  
 To hear me? Let me go : take back thy  
 gift :  
 Why should a man desire in any way  
 To vary from the kindly race of men,  
 Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
 Where all should pause, as is most meet  
 for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there  
 comes  
 A glimpse of that dark world where I  
 was born.  
 Once more the old mysterious glimmer  
 steals  
 From thy pure brows, and from thy  
 shoulders pure,  
 And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.  
 Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the  
 gloom,  
 Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to  
 mine,  
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild  
 team  
 Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,  
 arise,  
 And shake the darkness from their  
 loosen'd manes,  
 And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
 In silence, then before thine answer  
 given  
 Departest, and thy tears are on my  
 cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy  
 tears,  
 And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,

In days far-off, on that dark earth, be  
 true ?  
 ' The Gods themselves cannot recall their  
 gifts.'

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another  
 heart  
 In days far-off, and with what other eyes  
 I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—  
 The lucid outline forming round thee ;  
 saw  
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;  
 Changed with thy mystic change, and  
 felt my blood  
 Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd  
 all  
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I  
 lay,  
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-  
 warm  
 With kisses balmier than half-opening  
 buds  
 Of April, and could hear the lips that  
 kiss'd  
 Whispering I knew not what of wild and  
 sweet,  
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo  
 sing,  
 While I lion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East .  
 How can my nature longer mix with  
 thine ?  
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled  
 feet  
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when  
 the steam  
 Floats up from those dim fields about the  
 homes  
 Of happy men that have the power to  
 die,  
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead.  
 Release me, and restore me to the ground ;  
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my  
 grave :  
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by  
 morn ;  
 I earth in earth forget these empty courts,  
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

## LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn :  
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall ;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataclysms.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;  
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;  
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;  
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;  
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,  
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, ' My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,  
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,  
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—  
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, ' I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;'  
 Saying, ' Dost thou love me, cousin ?' weeping, ' I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;  
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;  
 Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,  
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,  
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !  
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,  
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—having known me—to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,  
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this ? his eyes are heavy : think not they are glazed with wine.  
Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought :  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—  
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,  
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth !  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that en from honest Nature's rule !  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool !

Well—'tis well that I should bluster !—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—  
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit ?  
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come  
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the mind ?  
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move .  
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore ?  
No—she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,  
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,  
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom years,  
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears ;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt !

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy ! wherefore should I care ?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint.  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-stair'd ;—  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to bust all links of habit—there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing space ;  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime ?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

## GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;  
I hung with grooms and porters on the  
bridge,  
To watch the three tall spires ; and there  
I shaped*

*The city's ancient legend into this —*

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel  
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate  
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,  
And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but  
she

Did more, and underwent, and overcame,  
The woman of a thousand summers back,  
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled  
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought

Their children, clamouring, ' If we pay,  
we starve ! '

She sought her lord, and found him, where  
he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his hair

A yard behind. She told him of their  
tears,

And pray'd him, ' If they pay this tax,  
they starve. '

Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,  
' You would not let your little finger ache  
For such as *these* ? ' — ' But I would die, '  
said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by  
Paul :

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;  
' Oh ay, ay, ay, you talk ! ' — ' Alas ! ' she  
said,

' But prove me what it is I would not do. '  
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,  
He answer'd, ' Ride you naked thro' the  
town,

And I repeal it ; ' and nodding, as in scorn,  
He pated, with great strides among his  
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,  
As winds from all the compass shift and  
blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,  
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,  
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet,  
all

The hard condition ; but that she would  
loose

The people : therefore, as they loved her  
well,

From then till noon no foot should pace  
the street,

No eye look down, she passing ; but that all  
Should keep within, door shut, and  
window barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower,  
and there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,  
The grim Eail's gift ; but ever at a breath  
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon  
Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook her  
head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her  
knee ;

Unclad heiself in haste ; adown the stair  
Stole on ; and, like a cieeping sunbeam,  
slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd  
The gateway ; there she found her palfrey  
trapt

In purple blazon'd with aïmorial gold.

Then she rode foith, clothed on with  
chastity :

The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,  
And all the low wind hardly breathed for  
fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the  
spout

Had cunning eyes to see : the barking cur  
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's foot-  
fall shot

Light horrors thro' her pulses : the blind  
walls

Were full of chinks and holes ; and  
overhead

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared : but she  
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw  
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the  
field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the  
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity :

And one low churl, compact of thankless  
earth,

The fatal byword of all yeas to come,

Boring a little auger-hole in fear,  
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had  
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,  
And dropt before him. So the Powers,  
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused ;  
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and all  
at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound, the  
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred  
towers,

One after one : but even then she gain'd  
Her bower ; whence reissuing, iobed and  
crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax away  
And built herself an everlasting name—

## THE DAY-DREAM.

### PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :

A pleasant hour has passed away  
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,  
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.

As by the lattice you reclined,  
I went thro' many wayward moods

To see you dreaming—and, behind,  
A summer crisp with shining woods.

And I too dream'd, until at last  
Across my fancy, brooding warm,

The reflex of a legend past,  
And loosely settled into form.

And would you have the thought I had,  
And see the vision that I saw,

Then take the broidery-frame, and add  
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,

And I will tell it. Turn your face,  
No! look with that too-earnest eye—

The rhymes are dazzled from their place,  
And order'd words asunder fly.

## THE SLEEPING PALACE

### I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf  
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains,

Here rests the sap within the leaf,  
 Here stays the blood along the veins.  
 Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,  
 Faint murmurs from the meadows  
     come,  
 Like hints and echoes of the world  
 To spirits folded in the womb.

## II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns  
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.  
 The fountain to his place returns  
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.  
 Here droops the banner on the tower,  
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,  
 The peacock in his laurel bowel,  
 The parrot in his gilded wiles.

## III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs :  
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.  
 The mantles from the golden pegs  
 Droop sleepily : no sound is made,  
 Not even of a gnat that sings.  
 More like a picture seemeth all  
 Than those old portraits of old kings,  
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

## IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask  
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and  
     there  
 The wrinkled steward at his task,  
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair ;  
 The page has caught her hand in his .  
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak :  
 His own are pouted to a kiss :  
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

## V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,  
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,  
 Make prisms in every carven glass,  
 And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.  
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,  
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.  
 His state the king reposing keeps.  
 He must have been a jovial king.

## VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows  
 At distance like a little wood ;  
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,  
 And grapes with bunches red as blood ;  
 All creeping plants, a wall of green  
 Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,  
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,  
 High up, the topmost palace spire.

## VII.

When will the hundred summers die,  
 And thought and time be born again,  
 And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,  
 Bring truth that sways the soul of men ?  
 Here all things in their place remain,  
 As all were order'd, ages since.  
 Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,  
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

## I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,  
 She lying on her couch alone,  
 Across the purple coverlet,  
 The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,  
 On either side her tranced form  
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :  
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,  
 And moves not on the rounded cuil.

## II.

The silk star-broder'd coverlid  
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould  
 Languidly ever ; and, amid  
 Her full black ringlets downward  
     roll'd,  
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm  
 With bracelets of the diamond bight :  
 Her constant beauty doth inform  
 Stillness with love, and day with light

## III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard  
 In palace chambers far apart.  
 The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd  
 That lie upon her charmed heart.

## THE DEPARTURE.

## I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,  
 And round her waist she felt it fold,  
 And far across the hills they went  
 In that new world which is the old :  
 Across the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 And deep into the dying day  
 The happy princess follow'd him.

## II.

'I'd sleep another hundred years,  
 O love, for such another kiss ;'  
 'O wake for ever, love,' she heais,  
 'O love, 'twas such as this and this '  
 And o'er them many a sliding star,  
 And many a meriy wind was borne,  
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,  
 The twilight melted into morn.

## III.

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep '  
 'O happy sleep, that lightly fled !'  
 'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep '  
 'O love, thy kiss would wake the dead !'  
 And o'er them many a flowing range  
 Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,  
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,  
 The twilight died into the dark.

## IV.

'A hundred summers ! can it be ?  
 And whither goest thou, tell me where ?'  
 'O seek my father's court with me,  
 For there are greater wonders there '  
 And o'er the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 Beyond the night, across the day,  
 Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

## MORAL.

## I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
 And if you find no moral there,  
 Go, look in any glass and say,  
 What moral is in being fair.

Oh, to what uses shall we put  
 The wildweed-flower that simply blows ?  
 And is there any moral shut  
 Within the bosom of the rose ?

## II.

But any man that walks the mead,  
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,  
 According as his humours lead,  
 A meaning suited to his mind.  
 And liberal applications lie  
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;  
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I  
 Should hook it to some useful end.

## L'ENVOI.

## I.

You shake your head. A random string  
 Your finer female sense offends.  
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing  
 To fall asleep with all one's friends ;  
 To pass with all our social ties  
 To silence from the paths of men ;  
 And every hundred years to rise  
 And learn the world, and sleep again ;  
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wais,  
 And wake on science grown to more,  
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,  
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;  
 And all that else the years will show,  
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,  
 The vast Republics that may grow,  
 The Federations and the Powers ;  
 Titanic forces taking birth  
 In divers seasons, divers climes ;  
 For we are Ancients of the earth,  
 And in the morning of the times.

## II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep  
 Thro' sunny decads new and strange,  
 Or gay quinquennials would we reap  
 The flower and quintessence of change.

## III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !  
 So much your eyes my fancy take—  
 Be still the first to leap to light  
 That I might kiss those eyes awake !

For, am I right, or am I wrong,  
 To choose your own you did not care ;  
 You'd have *my* moral from the song,  
 And I will take my pleasure there :  
 And, am I right or am I wrong,  
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',  
 To search a meaning for the song,  
 Perforce will still revert to you ;  
 Nor finds a closer truth than this  
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,  
 And evermore a costly kiss  
 The prelude to some brighter world.

## IV.

For since the time when Adam first  
 Embraced his Eve in happy hour,  
 And every bird of Eden burst  
 In carol, every bud to flower,  
 What eyes, like thine, have waken'd  
 hopes,  
 What lips, like thine, so sweetly  
 join'd ?  
 Where on the double rosebud droops  
 The fulness of the pensive mind ;  
 Which all too dearly self-involved,  
 Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;  
 A sleep by kisses undissolved,  
 That lets thee neither hear nor see :  
 But break it. In the name of wife,  
 And in the lights that name may  
 give,  
 Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,  
 And that for which I came to live.

## EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
 And, if you find a meaning there,  
 O whisper to your glass, and say,  
 ' What wonder, if he thinks me fair ?'  
 What wonder I was all unwise,  
 To shape the song for your delight  
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise  
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot  
 light ?  
 Or old-world trains, upheld at court  
 By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—  
 But take it—earnest wed with sport,  
 And either sacred unto you.

## AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,  
 But it is wild and barren,  
 A garden too with scarce a tree,  
 And waster than a warren :  
 Yet say the neighbours when they call,  
 It is not bad but good land,  
 And in it is the germ of all  
 That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great  
 In days of old Amphion,  
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
 Nor cared for seed or scion !  
 And had I lived when song was great,  
 And legs of trees were lumber,  
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
 And fiddled in the timber !

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,  
 Such happy intonation,  
 Wherever he sat down and sung  
 He left a small plantation ;  
 Wherever in a lonely grove  
 He set up his forlorn pipes,  
 The gouty oak began to move,  
 And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stir'd its bushy crown,  
 And, as tradition teaches,  
 Young ashes pirouetted down  
 Coquetting with young beeches ;  
 And briony-vine and ivy-wreath  
 Ran forward to his rhyming,  
 And from the valleys underneath  
 Came little copeses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent  
 The woodbine wreaths that bind her,  
 And down the middle, buzz ! she went  
 With all her bees behind her :  
 The poplars, in long order due,  
 With cypress promenaded,  
 The shock-head willows two and two  
 By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shod alder from the wave,  
 Came yews, a dismal coterie ;  
 Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,  
 Poussetting with a sloe-tree :

Old elms came breaking from the vine,  
The vine stream'd out to follow,  
And, sweating resin, plump'd the pine  
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,  
When, ere his song was ended,  
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,  
The country-side descended;  
And shepherds from the mountain-caves  
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-fright-  
en'd,  
As dash'd about the drunken leaves  
The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,  
And wanton without measure;  
So youthful and so flexible then,  
—You moved her at your pleasure.  
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the  
twigs!

And make her dance attendance;  
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,  
And scurrious roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age  
I could not move a thistle;  
The very sparrows in the hedge  
Scarce answer to my whistle;  
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick  
With strumming and with scraping,  
A jackass heehaws from the ick,  
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound  
Like sleepy counsel pleading;  
O Lord!—'tis in my neighbour's ground,  
The modern Muses reading.  
They read Botanic Treatises,  
And Works on Gardening thro' there,  
And Methods of transplanting trees  
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose  
O'er books of travell'd seamen,  
And show you slips of all that grows  
From England to Van Diemen.  
They read in arbours clipt and cut,  
And alleys, faded places,  
By squares of tropic summer shut  
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,  
Are neither green nor sappy;  
Half-conscious of the garden-squint,  
The spindlings look unhappy.  
Better to me the meanest weed  
That blows upon its mountain,  
The vilest herb that runs to seed  
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom:  
Enough if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

## ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon:  
My breath to heaven like vapour goes:  
May my soul follow soon!  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord:  
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,  
To yonder shining ground;  
As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To yonder argent round;  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee;  
So in mine earthly house I am,  
To that I hope to be.  
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,  
Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doois;  
The flashes come and go;  
All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
And strows her lights below,

And deepens on and up ! the gates  
 Roll back, and far within  
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,  
 To make me pure of sin.  
 The sabbaths of Eternity,  
 One sabbath deep and wide—  
 A light upon the shining sea—  
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

## SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
 My strength is as the strength of ten,  
 Because my heart is pure.  
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
 The horse and rider reel :  
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
 And when the tide of combat stands,  
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
 On whom their favours fall !  
 For them I battle till the end,  
 To save from shame and thrall :  
 But all my heart is drawn above,  
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :

I never felt the kiss of love,  
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;  
 So keep I far thro' faith and prayer  
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
 A light before me swims,  
 Between dark stems the forest glows,  
 I hear a noise of hymns :  
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;  
 I hear a voice but none are there ;  
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
 The tapers burning fair.  
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
 And solemn chaunts resound between

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
 I find a magic bark ;  
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :  
 I float till all is dark.  
 A gentle sound, an awful light !  
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :  
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
 On sleeping wings they sail.  
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !  
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
 As down dark tides the glory slides,  
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
 The cock crows ere the Christmas  
 morn,  
 The streets are dumb with snow.  
 The tempest crackles on the leads,  
 And, ringing, springs from brand and  
 mail ;  
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
 And gilds the driving hail.  
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;  
 No brachy thicket shelter yields ;  
 But blessed foams in whistling storms  
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
 Such hope, I know not fear ;  
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
 That often meet me here.  
 I muse on joy that will not cease,  
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
 Whose odours haunt my dreams ;  
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
 This mortal armour that I wear,  
 This weight and size, this heat and  
 eyes,  
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And thro' the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony  
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :  
 ' O just and faithful knight of God !  
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
 Until I find the holy Grail.

## EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town  
 Met me walking on yonder way,  
 'And have you lost your heart?' she said ;  
 'And are you married yet, Edward  
 Gray?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :  
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
 'Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more  
 Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

'Ellen Adair she loved me well,  
 Against her father's and mother's will :  
 To-day I sat for an hour and wept,  
 By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold,  
 Thought her proud, and fled over thesea ;  
 Fill'd I was with folly and spite,  
 When 'Ellen Adair was dying for me.

'Cruel, cruel the words I said !  
 Cruelly came they back to-day :  
 "You're too slight and fickle," I said,  
 "To trouble the heart of Edward Gray."

'There I put my face in the grass—  
 Whisper'd, "Listen to my despair :  
 I repent me of all I did :  
 Speak a little, Ellen Adair !"

'Then I took a pencil, and wrote  
 On the mossy stone, as I lay,  
 "Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;  
 And here the heart of Edward Gray !"

'Love may come, and love may go,  
 And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree ;  
 But I will love no more, no more,  
 Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

'Bitterly wept I over the stone :  
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away .  
 There lies the body of Ellen Adair !  
 And there the heart of Edward Gray !'

WILL WATERPROOF'S  
LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,  
 To which I most resort,  
 How goes the time ? 'Tis five o'clock.  
 Go fetch a pint of port :  
 But let it not be such as that  
 You set before chance-comers,  
 But such whose father-grape grew fat  
 On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,  
 But may she still be kind,  
 And whisper lovely words, and use  
 Her influence on the mind,  
 To make me write my random rhymes,  
 Ere they be half-forgotten ;  
 Nor add and alter, many times,  
 Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips  
 Her laurel in the wine,  
 And lays it thrice upon my lips,  
 These favour'd lips of mine ;  
 Until the charm have power to make  
 New lifeblood warm the bosom,  
 And barren commonplaces break  
 In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;  
 Her gradual fingers steal  
 And touch upon the master-chord  
 Of all I felt and feel.  
 Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,  
 And phantom hopes assemble ;  
 And that child's heart within the man's  
 Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,  
 By many pleasant ways,  
 Against its fountain upward runs  
 The current of my days .  
 I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;  
 The gas-light wavers dimmer ;  
 And softly, thro' a vinous mist,  
 My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,  
 Unboding critic-pen,  
 Or that eternal want of pence,  
 Which vexes public men,  
 Who hold their hands to all, and cry  
 For that which all deny them—  
 Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,  
 And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,  
 Tho' fortune clip my wings,  
 I will not cramp my heart, nor take  
 Half-views of men and things.  
 Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;  
 There must be stormy weather ;  
 But for some true result of good  
 All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;  
 If old things, there are new ;  
 Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,  
 Yet glimpses of the true.  
 Let ruffs be rife in prose and rhyme,  
 We lack not rhymes and reasons,  
 As on this whirlingig of Time  
 We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;  
 With fair horizons bound :  
 This whole wide earth of light and shade  
 Comes out a perfect round.  
 High over roaring Temple-bar,  
 And set in Heaven's third story,  
 I look at all things as they are,  
 But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest  
 Half-mused, or reeling ripe,  
 The pint, you brought me, was the best  
 That ever came from pipe.  
 But tho' the port surpasses praise,  
 My nerves have dealt with stiffer.  
 Is there some magic in the place ?  
 Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,  
 No pint of white or red  
 Had ever half the power to turn  
 This wheel within my head,

Which bears a season'd brain about,  
 Unsubject to confusion,  
 Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,  
 Tho' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,  
 With many kinsmen gay,  
 Where long and largely we carouse  
 As who shall say me nay :  
 Each month, a birth-day coming on,  
 We drink defying trouble,  
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,  
 And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,  
 Had relish fiery-new,  
 Or elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,  
 As old as Waterloo ;  
 Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,  
 In musty bins and chambers,  
 Had cast upon its crusty side  
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !  
 She answer'd to my call,  
 She changes with that mood or this,  
 Is all-in-all to all :  
 She lit the spark within my throat,  
 To make my blood run quicker,  
 Used all her fiery will, and smote  
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about  
 The waiter's hands, that reach  
 To each his perfect pint of stout,  
 His proper chop to each.  
 He looks not like the common breed  
 That with the napkin dally ;  
 I think he came like Ganymede,  
 From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg  
 Than modern poultry drop,  
 Stept forward on a firmer leg,  
 And cramm'd a plumper crop ;  
 Upon an ampler dunghill trod,  
 Crow'd lustier late and early,  
 Sipt wine from silver, praising God,  
 And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,  
 Till in a court he saw  
 A something-pottle-bodied boy  
 That knuckled at the taw :  
 He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and  
 good,  
 Flew over roof and casement :  
 His brothers of the weather stood  
 Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spire,  
 And follow'd with acclams,  
 A sign to many a staring shire  
 Came crowing over Thames.  
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,  
 Till, where the street grows straiter,  
 One fix'd for ever at the door,  
 And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?  
 How out of place she makes  
 The violet of a legend blow  
 Among the chops and steaks !  
 'Tis but a steward of the can,  
 One shade more plump than common ;  
 As just and mere a serving-man  
 As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down  
 Into the common day ?  
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,  
 Which I shall have to pay ?  
 For, something duller than at first,  
 Nor wholly comfortable,  
 I sit, my empty glass reversed,  
 And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,  
 I take myself to task ;  
 Lest of the fullness of my life  
 I leave an empty flask :  
 For I had hope, by something rare  
 To prove myself a poet :  
 But, while I plan and plan, my han  
 Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,  
 Till they be gather'd up ;  
 The truth, that flies the flowing can,  
 Will haunt the vacant cup :

And others' follies teach us not,  
 Nor much their wisdom teaches ;  
 And most, of sterling worth, is what  
 Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !  
 We know not what we know.  
 But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;  
 'Tis gone, and let it go.  
 'Tis gone : a thousand such have slept  
 Away from my embraces,  
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt  
 Of daiken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy betters went  
 Long since, and came no more ;  
 With peals of genial clamour sent  
 From many a tavern-dool,  
 With twisted quirks and happy hits,  
 From misty men of letters ;  
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits—  
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks  
 Had yet their native glow :  
 Nor yet the fear of little books  
 Had made him talk for show ;  
 But, all his vast heart sherns-warm'd,  
 He flash'd his random speeches,  
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd  
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,  
 Like all good things on earth !  
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou  
 last,  
 At half thy real worth ?  
 I hold it good, good things should pass :  
 With time I will not quarrel :  
 It is but yonder empty glass  
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,  
 To which I most resort,  
 I too must part : I hold thee dear  
 For this good pint of port.  
 For this, thou shalt from all things suck  
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;  
 And wheresoe'er thou move, good luck  
 Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,  
 The sphere thy fate allots :  
 Thy latter days increased with pence  
 Go down among the pets :  
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam  
 In haunts of hungry sinners,  
 Old boxes, larded with the steam  
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our skins,  
 Would quarrel with our lot ;  
 Thy care is, under polish'd tins,  
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;  
 To come and go, and come again,  
 Returning like the pewit,  
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,  
 That trifle with the culet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head  
 The thick-set hazel dies ;  
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread  
 The corners of thine eyes :  
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest  
 Our changeful equinoxes,  
 Till mellow Death, like some late guest,  
 Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease  
 To pace the gritted floor,  
 And, laying down an unctuous lease  
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;  
 No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,  
 Shall show thee past to Heaven :  
 But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,  
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

### LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,  
 And clouds are highest up in air,  
 Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe  
 To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :  
 Lovers long-betroth'd were they :  
 They too will wed the morrow morn :  
 God's blessing on the day !

'He does not love me for my birth,  
 Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;  
 He loves me for my own true worth,  
 And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,  
 Said, 'Who was this that went from  
 thee ?'

'It was my cousin,' said Lady Clare,  
 'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd !' said Alice the  
 nurse,

'That all comes round so just and fair :  
 Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,  
 And you are *not* the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse,  
 my nurse ?'

Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so  
 wild ?'

'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,  
 'I speak the truth : you are my child.'

'The old Earl's daughter died at my  
 breast ;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread !  
 I buried her like my own sweet child,  
 And put my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,  
 O mother,' she said, 'if this be true,  
 To keep the best man under the sun  
 So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the  
 nurse,

'But keep the secret for your life,  
 And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,  
 When you are man and wife.'

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,  
 'I will speak out, for I dare not lie  
 Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,  
 And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the  
 nurse,

'But keep the secret all ye can.'  
 She said, 'Not so : but I will know  
 If there be any faith in man.'

'Nay now, what faith ?' said Alice the  
 nurse,

'The man will cleave unto his right.'  
 'And he shall have it,' the lady replied,  
 'Tho' I should die to-night.'

'Yet givè one kiss to youi mother dear !  
'Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee.'  
'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,  
'So stange it seems to me.

'Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,  
My mother dear, if this be so,  
And lay your hand upon my head,  
And bless me, mother, ere I go.'

She clad herself in a russet gown,  
She was no longer Lady Clare :  
She went by dale, and she went by down,  
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had  
brought  
Leapt up from where she lay,  
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,  
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower :  
'O Lady Clare, you shame youi worth !  
Why come you drest like a village maid,  
That are the flower of the earth ?'

'If I come diest like a village maid,  
I am but as my fortunes are :  
I am a beggar born,' she said,  
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,  
'For I am yours in word and in deed.  
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,  
'Your riddle is hard to read.'

O and proudly stood she up !  
Her heart within her did not fail :  
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,  
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :  
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she  
stood :

'If you are not the heiress born,  
And I,' said he, 'the next in blood—

'If you are not the heiress born,  
And I,' said he, 'the lawful heir,  
We two will wed to-morrow morn,  
And you shall still be Lady Clare.'

## THE CAPTAIN.

## A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror  
Doeth grievous wrong.  
Deep as Hell I count his error.  
Let him hear my song.  
Brave the Captain was : the seamen  
Made a gallant crew,  
Gallant sons of English freemen,  
Sailors bold and true.  
But they hated his oppression,  
Stern he was and rash ;  
So for every light transgression'  
Doom'd them to the lash.  
Day by day more harsh and cruel  
Seem'd the Captain's mood.  
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel  
Burnt in each man's blood.  
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,  
Hoped to make the name  
Of his vessel great in story,  
Wheresoe'er he came.  
So they past by capes and islands,  
Many a harbour-mouth,  
Sailing under palmy highlands  
Far within the South.  
On a day when they were going  
O'er the lone expanse,  
In the north, her canvas flowing,  
Rose a ship of France.  
Then the Captain's colour heighten'd,  
Joyful came his speech :  
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd  
In the eyes of each.  
'Chase,' he said : the ship flew for-  
ward,  
And the wind did blow ;  
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,  
Till she near'd the foe.  
Then they look'd at him they hated,  
Had what they desired :  
Mute with folded arms they wait'd—  
Not a gun was fired.  
But they heard the foeman's thundei  
Roaring out their doom ;  
All the air was torn in sunder,  
Crashing went the boom,

Spars were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd,  
 Bullets fell like rain ;  
 Over mast and deck were scatter'd  
 Blood and brains of men.  
 Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :  
 Every mother's son—  
 Down they dropt—no word was spoken—  
 Each beside his gun.  
 On the decks as they were lying,  
 Were their faces grim.  
 In the blood, as they lay dying,  
 Did they smile on him.  
 Those, in whom he had reliance  
 For his noble name,  
 With one smile of still defiance  
 Sold him unto shame.  
 Shame and wrath his heart confounded,  
 Pale he turn'd and red,  
 Till himself was deadly wounded  
 Falling on the dead.  
 Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !  
 Years have wander'd by,  
 Side by side beneath the water  
 Crew and Captain lie ;  
 There the sunlit ocean tosses  
 O'er them mouldering,  
 And the lonely seabird crosses  
 With one waft of the wing.

### THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,  
 'If my heart by signs can tell,  
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,  
 And I think thou lov'st me well.'  
 She replies, in accents fainter,  
 'There is none I love like thee.'  
 He is but a landscape-painter,  
 And a village maiden she.  
 He to lips, that fondly falter,  
 Presses his without reproof :  
 Leads her to the village altar,  
 And they leave her father's roof.  
 'I can make no marriage present :  
 Little can I give my wife.  
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,  
 And I love thee more than life.'  
 They by parks and lodges going  
 See the lordly castles stand :

Summer woods, about them blowing,  
 Made a murmur in the land.  
 From deep thought himself he rouses,  
 Says to her that loves him well,  
 'Let us see these handsome houses  
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'  
 So she goes by him attended,  
 Hears him lovingly converse,  
 Sees whatever fair and splendid  
 Lay betwixt his home and hers ;  
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,  
 Parks and order'd gardens great,  
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,  
 Built for pleasure and for state.  
 All he shows her makes him dearer .  
 Evermore she seems to gaze  
 On that cottage growing nearer,  
 Where they twain will spend their days.  
 O but she will love him truly !  
 He shall have a cheerful home ;  
 She will order all things duly,  
 When beneath his roof they come.  
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,  
 Till a gateway she discerns  
 With armorial bearings stately,  
 And beneath the gate she turns ;  
 Sees a mansion more majestic  
 Than all those she saw before :  
 Many a gallant gay domestic  
 Bows before him at the door.  
 And they speak in gentle murmur,  
 When they answer to his call,  
 While he treads with footstep firmer,  
 Leading on from hall to hall.  
 And, while now she wonders blindly,  
 Nor the meaning can divine,  
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,  
 'All of this is mine and thine.'  
 Here he lives in state and bounty,  
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,  
 Not a lord in all the county  
 Is so great a lord as he.  
 All at once the colour flushes  
 Her sweet face from brow to chin .  
 As it were with shame she blushes,  
 And her spirit changed within.  
 Then her countenance all over  
 Pale again as death did prove .  
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,  
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.

So she strove against her weakness,  
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :  
 Shaped her heart with woman's meekness  
 To all duties of her rank :  
 And a gentle consort made he,  
 And her gentle mind was such  
 That she grew a noble lady,  
 And the people loved her much.  
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,  
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,  
 With the burthen of an honour  
 Unto which she was not born.  
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,  
 And she murmur'd, 'Oh, that he  
 Were once more that landscape-painter,  
 Which did win my heart from me !'  
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,  
 Fading slowly from his side :  
 Three fair children first she bore him,  
 Then before her time she died.  
 Weeping, weeping late and early,  
 Walking up and pacing down,  
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,  
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.  
 And he came to look upon her,  
 And he look'd at her and said,  
 'Bring the dress and put it on her,  
 That she wore when she was wed.'  
 Then her people, softly treading,  
 Bore to earth her body, drest  
 In the dress that she was wed in,  
 That her spirit might have rest.

## THE VOYAGE.

## I.

We left behind the painted buoy  
 That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;  
 And madly danced our hearts with joy,  
 As fast we fled to the South :  
 How fresh was every sight and sound  
 On open main or winding shore !  
 We knew the merry world was round,  
 And we might sail for evermore.

## II.

Warm broke the breeze 'against the  
 blow,  
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail .

The Lady's-head upon the prow  
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the  
 gale.

The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,  
 And swept behind ; so quick the run,  
 We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
 We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

## III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,  
 And burn the threshold of the night,  
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !  
 How oft the purple-skirted robe  
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,  
 As thro' the slumber of the globe  
 Again we dash'd into the dawn !

## IV.

New stars all night above the brim  
 Of waters lighten'd into view ;  
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
 Changed every moment as we flew.  
 Far ran the naked moon across  
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,  
 Or flying shone, the silver boss  
 Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

## V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,  
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,  
 We past long lines of Northern capes  
 And dewy Northern meadows green.  
 We came to warmer waves, and deep  
 Across the boundless east we drove,  
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep  
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

## VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,  
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering  
 brine  
 With ashy rains, that spreading made  
 Fantastic plume or sable pine ;  
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods  
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,  
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

## VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !  
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;  
 At times a carven craft would shoot  
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
 But we not paused for fruit nor flowers.

## VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
 Down the waste waters day and night,  
 And still we follow'd where she led,  
 In hope to gain upon her flight.  
 Her face was evermore unseen,  
 And fixt upon the far sea-line ;  
 But each man mummur'd, 'O my Queen,  
 I follow till I make thee mine.'

## IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd  
 Like Fancy made of golden air,  
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,  
 Now high on waves that idly burst  
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the  
     sea,  
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

## X.

And only one among us—him  
 We pleas'd not—he was seldom  
     pleas'd :  
 He saw not far : his eyes were dim :  
 But ours he swore were all diseased.  
 'A ship of fools,' he shriek'd in spite,  
 'A ship of fools,' he sneer'd and  
     wept.  
 And overboard one stormy night  
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

## XI.

And never sail of ours was foul'd,  
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;  
 We lov'd the glories of the world,  
 But laws of nature were our scorn.

For blasts would rise and rave and cease,  
 But whence were those that drove the  
     sail  
 Across the whulwind's heart of peace,  
 And to and thro' the counter gale ?

## XII.

Again to colder climes we came,  
 For still we follow'd where she led .  
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
 And half the crew are sick or dead,  
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,  
 We follow that which flies before :  
 We know the merry world is round,  
 And we may sail for evermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND  
QUEEN GUINEVERE.

## A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,  
 With tears and smiles from heaven again  
 The maiden Spring upon the plain  
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.  
 In crystal vapour everywhere  
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,  
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,  
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green  
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song :  
 Sometimes the throstle whistled strong :  
 Sometimes the sparrow, wheel'd along,  
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :  
 By grassy capes with fuller sound  
 In curves the yellowing river ran,  
 And drooping chestnut-buds began  
 To spread into the perfect fan,  
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,  
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere  
 Rode thro' the covets of the deer,  
 With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :  
 A gown of grass-green silk she wore,  
 Buckled with golden clasps before ;  
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore  
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,  
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,  
 In mosses mixt with violet  
 Her cream-white mule his pastern set :  
 And fleetest now she skimm'd the  
 plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs  
 By night to eery warblings,  
 When all the glimmering moorland rings  
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,  
 The happy winds upon her play'd,  
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid :  
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,  
 A man had given all other bliss,  
 And all his worldly worth for this,  
 To waste his whole heart in one kiss  
 Upon her perfect lips.

### A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
 Thy tribute wave deliver :  
 No more by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
 A rivulet then a river .  
 No where by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,  
 And here thine aspen sliver ;  
 And here by thee will hum the bee,  
 For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
 A thousand moons will quiver ;  
 But not by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.

### THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;  
 She was more fair than words can say :  
 Bare-footed came the beggar maid  
 Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stepped down,  
 To meet and greet her on her way ;  
 ' It is no wonder,' said the lords,  
 ' She is more beautiful than day.'

As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
 She in her poor attire was seen :  
 One praised her ancles, one her eyes,  
 One her dark hair and lovesome mien.  
 So sweet a face, such angel grace,  
 In all that land had never been :  
 Cophetua sware a royal oath :  
 ' This beggar maid shall be my queen !'

### THE EAGLE.

#### FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands ;  
 Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
 Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;  
 He watches from his mountain walls,  
 And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave  
 Yon orange sunset waning slow :  
 From fringes of the faded eve,  
 O, happy planet, eastward go ;  
 Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
 Thy silver sister-world, and rise  
 To glass herself in dewy eyes  
 That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,  
 Dip forward under starry light,  
 And move me to my marriage-morn,  
 And round again to happy night.

COME not, when I am dead,  
 To drop thy foolish tears upon my  
 grave,  
 To tiample round my fallen head,  
 And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst  
 not save.  
 There let the wind sweep and the plover  
 cry ;  
 But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime  
 I care no longer, being all unblest :  
 Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
 Time,  
 And I desire to rest.  
 Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where  
 I lie :  
 Go by, go by.

### THE LETTERS.

#### I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,  
 A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,  
 I peer'd athwart the chancel pane  
 And saw the altar cold and bare.  
 A clog of lead was round my feet,  
 A band of pain across my brow ;  
 'Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet  
 Before you hear my marriage vow '

#### II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song  
 That mock'd the wholesome human  
 heart,  
 And then we met in wraith and wrong,  
 We met, but only meant to part.  
 Full cold my greeting was and dry ;  
 She faintly smiled, she hardly moved ;  
 I saw with half-unconscious eye  
 She wore the colours I approved.

#### III.

She took the little ivory chest,  
 With half a sigh she turn'd the key,  
 Then raised her head with lips compress'd,  
 And gave my letters back to me.  
 And gave the trinkets and the rings,  
 My gifts, when gifts of mine could  
 please ;  
 As looks a father on the things  
 Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

#### IV

She told me all her friends had said ;  
 I raged against the public liar ;  
 She talk'd as if her love were dead,  
 But in my words were seeds of fire.

'No more of love ; your sex is known .  
 I never will be twice deceived.  
 Henceforth I trust the man alone,  
 The woman cannot be believed.

#### V.

'Thio' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—  
 And women's slander is the worst,  
 And you, whom once I lov'd so well,  
 Thio' you, my life will be accurst.'  
 I spoke with heat, and heat and force,  
 I shook her breast with vague alarms—  
 Like torrents from a mountain source  
 We rush'd into each other's arms.

#### VI.

We parted : sweetly gleam'd the stars,  
 And sweet the vapour-braided blue  
 Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,  
 As homeward by the church I diew.  
 The very graves appear'd to smile,  
 So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells ;  
 'Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,  
 There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

### THE VISION OF SIN.

#### I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late :  
 A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.  
 He rode a horse with wings, that would  
 have flown,  
 But that his heavy rider kept him down.  
 And from the palace came a child of sin,  
 And took him by the curls, and led him in,  
 Where sat a company with heated eyes,  
 Expecting when a fountain should arise :  
 A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—  
 As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
 Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and  
 capes—  
 Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid  
 shapes,  
 By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
 and piles of grapes.

#### II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,  
 Gathering up from all the lower ground ;

Narrowing in to where they sat assembled  
 Low voluptuous music winding trembled,  
 Wov'n in circles : they that heard it sigh'd,  
 Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,  
 Swung themselves, and in low tones replied ;

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide  
 Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;  
 Then the music touch'd the gates and died ;  
 Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,  
 Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale,  
 Till thronging in and in, to where they waited,

As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,  
 The strong tempestuous treble throb'd  
 and palpitated ;

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,  
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,  
 Flung the torrent rainbow round :  
 Then they started from their places,  
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,  
 Half-invisible to the view,  
 Wheeling with precipitate paces  
 To the melody, till they flew,  
 Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,  
 Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
 Like to Furies, like to Graces,  
 Dash'd together in blinding dew :  
 Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,  
 The nerve-dissolving melody  
 Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

## III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-  
 tract,

That girt the region with high cliff and  
 lawn :

I saw that every morning, far withdrawn  
 Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
 God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,  
 Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,  
 From those still heights, and, slowly  
 drawing near,

A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,  
 Came floating on for many a month and  
 year,

Unheeded : and I thought I would have  
 spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it grew too  
 late :

But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine  
 was broken,

When that cold vapour touch'd the palace  
 gate,

And link'd again. I saw within my head  
 A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as  
 death,

Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,  
 And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

## IV.

' Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !  
 Here is custom come your way ;  
 Take my brute, and lead him in,  
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

' Bitter barmaid, waning fast !  
 See that sheets are on my bed ;  
 What ! the flower of life is past :  
 It is long before you wed.

' Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,  
 At the Dragon on the heath !  
 Let us have a quiet hour,  
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

' I am old, but let me drink ;  
 Bring me spices, bring me wine ;  
 I remember, when I think,  
 That my youth was half divine

Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
 When a blanket wraps the day,  
 When the rotten woodland drops,  
 And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

' Sit thee down, and have no shame,  
 Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :  
 What care I for any name ?  
 What for order or degree ?

' Let me screw thee up a peg :  
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine :  
 Callest thou that thing a leg ?  
 Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

' Thou shalt not be saved by works :  
 Thou hast been a sinner too :  
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
 Empty scarecrows, I and you !

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :  
Have a rouse before the morn :  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

'We are men of ruin'd blood ;  
Therefore comes it we are wise.  
Fish are we that love the mud,  
Rising to no fancy-flies.

'Name and fame ! to fly sublime  
Thro' the courts, the camps, the  
schools,  
Is to be the ball of Time,  
Banded by the hands of fools.

'Friendship !—to be two in one—  
Let the canting liar pack !  
Well I know, when I am gone,  
How she mouths behind my back.

'Virtue !—to be good and just—  
Every heart, when sifted well,  
Is a clot of warmer dust,  
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

'O ! we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbour's wife.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :  
Have a rouse before the morn :  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

'Drink, and let the parties rave :  
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

'He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power ;  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the fiercer hour.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup -  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

'Greet her with applausive breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

'No, I love not what is new ;  
She is of an ancient house :  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

'Let her go ! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs,  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

'Drink to lofty hopes that cool-  
Visions of a perfect State :  
Drunk we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

'Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

'Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;  
Set thy hoary fancies free ;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savours well to thee and me.

'Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could understand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.

'Tell me tales of thy first love—  
April hopes, the fools of chance ;  
Till the graves begin to move,  
And the dead begin to dance.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup :  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

'Trooping from their mouldy dens  
The chap-fallen circle spreads :  
Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

'You are bones, and what of that ?  
Every face, however full,  
Padded round with flesh and fat,  
Is but modell'd on a skull.

'Death is king, and Vivat Rex !  
Tread a measure on the stones,  
Madam—if I know your sex,  
From the fashion of your bones.

'No, I cannot praise the fife  
In your eye—nor yet your lip :  
All the more do I admire  
Joints of cunning workmanship.

'Lo ! God's likeness—the ground-plan—  
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed :  
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
Far too naked to be shamed !

'Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,  
While we keep a little breath !  
Drink to heavy Ignorance !  
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

'Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
And the longer night is near :  
What ! I 'am not all as wrong  
As a bitter jest is dear.

'Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,  
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;  
Unto me my maudlin gall  
And my mockeries of the world.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :  
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !  
Dregs of life, and lees of man :  
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

v.

The voice grew faint: there came a  
further change :  
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-  
range :  
Below were men and hoises pierced with  
worms,  
And slowly quickening into lower forms ;  
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of  
dross,  
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
with moss.

Then some one spake : 'Behold ! it was  
a crime  
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with  
time.'

Another said : 'The crime of sense  
became

The crime of malice, and is equal blame.'  
And one : 'He had not wholly quench'd  
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him  
sour'

At last I heard a voice upon the slope  
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope ?'  
To which an answer peal'd from that high  
land,

But in a tongue no man could understand ;  
And on the glimmering limit far with-  
drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

TO ———,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

'Cursed be he that moves my bones.'  
*Shakespeare's Epitaph.*

You might have won the Poet's name,  
If such be worth the winning now,  
And gain'd a laurel for your brow  
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;

But you have made the wiser choice,  
A life that moves to gracious ends  
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,  
A deedful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent doom  
Of those that wear the Poet's crown :  
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown  
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,  
Nor leave his music as of old,  
But round him ere he scarce be cold  
Begins the scandal and the cry :

'Proclaim the faults he would not show :  
Break lock and seal : betray the trust .  
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just  
The many-headed beast should know.'

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing  
 A song that pleased us from its worth ;  
 No public life was his on earth,  
 No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best :  
 His worst he kept, his best he gave.  
 My Shakespeare's curse on clown and  
 knave  
 Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be  
 The little life of bank and brier,  
 The bird that pipes his lone desire  
 And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud  
 And drops at Glory's temple-gates,  
 For whom the carrion vulture waits  
 To tear his heart before the crowd !

### TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls  
 Of water, sheets of summer glass,  
 The long divine Peneian pass,  
 The vast Akroeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,  
 With such a pencil, such a pen,  
 You shadow forth to distant men,  
 I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page,  
 And track'd you still on classic ground,  
 I grew in gladness till I found  
 My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd  
 And glisten'd—here and there alone  
 The broad-limb'd Gods at random  
 thrown  
 By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom  
 Of cavern pillars ; on the swell  
 The silver lily heaved and fell ;  
 And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea  
 By dancing rivulets fed his flocks  
 To him who sat upon the rocks,  
 And fluted to the morning sea.

BREAK, break, break,  
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !  
 And I would that my tongue could utter  
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
 That he shouts with his sister at play !  
 O well for the sailor lad,  
 That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on  
 To their haven under the hill ;  
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
 And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,  
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
 Will never come back to me.

### THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
 He pass'd by the town and out of the  
 street,  
 A light wind blew from the gates of the  
 sun,  
 And waves of shadow went over the  
 wheat,  
 And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
 And chanted a melody loud and sweet,  
 That made the wild-swan pause in her  
 cloud,  
 And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,  
 The snake slept under a spray,  
 The wild hawk stood with the down on  
 his beak,  
 And stared, with his foot on the prey,  
 And the nightingale thought, 'I have  
 sung many songs,  
 But never a one so gay,  
 For he sings of what the world will be  
 When the years have died away.'